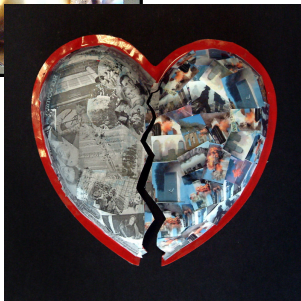
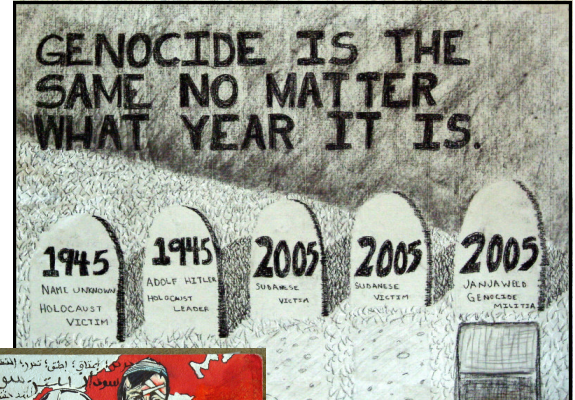




2005 City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest Book of Winning Entries



2005 City of Akron Holocaust Commemoration and Awards Ceremony

May 3, 2005 • Akron Summit County Public Library • Main Branch

Days of Remembrance 2005
May 1, 2005 - May 8, 2005



City of Akron, Ohio

DONALD L. PLUSQUELLIC, MAYOR

May 3, 2005

Dear Friend:

Welcome to the City of Akron's annual Holocaust Commemoration and Awards Ceremony. Once again, we come together to honor the outstanding student artists and writers who participated in the 2005 City of Akron Arts and Writing Contest. It is also a time for us to remember the millions of lives lost during the Holocaust.

This year's contest and commemoration focuses on the "Lessons of the Holocaust: Reflections, Then and Now." It is an expanded focus that asks students to compare the horrific events of the Holocaust to one that has taken place since the loss of 6 million European Jews before and during World War II. It is my hope that young people today can better understand what took place in Europe by relating a more recent atrocity or act of genocide, so to never allow such an event to happen again.

Our speaker today is Sandra Roberts, a teacher from Whitwell, Tennessee, whose 8th grade students collected more than 6 million paper clips to signify the lives lost during the Holocaust. The "Paper Clip Project" has been discussed on newscasts around the country and on NBC's "Today Show."

Inside this commemorative booklet, you will discover the names and works of those students who participated and who were selected by our judges for their outstanding interpretation of this year's theme. I hope you will take time to review their works. The winning writings are within and you will find the art and multimedia on display here at the Main Library April 1 through May 9.

I'd like to thank the schools, teachers and parents for their continued support of the young people who participated in the contest. Through our children, we hope to end all atrocities, against all people, everywhere. Thank you also to the Katie Wells Goodwin and the members of the City of Akron Holocaust Commemoration Committee.

Sincerely,

DONALD L. PLUSQUELLIC

Mayor

2005 City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest Participants Division I (grades 6 through 8)

Copley-Fairlawn Middle School (Teachers Dina DiDonato & Melissa Neuhauser)

Nico Belger	Emily Kromalic
Trevor Cannon	Alena Ruman
Michelle Dichlian	Allison Schumacher
Jessica Ezzie	Kyle Sutter
Lauren Frank	Kaylie West

Hyre Middle School (Teacher Patty Bodine)

Tommy Hickman

Lippman Day School (Teacher Sarah Bricklin)

Lawrence Anderle	Isaac Genshaft	Roman Malevannyy
Jonathan Bashor	Matthew Golden	Rone Ohayon
Taylor Cunningham	Arielle Goldstein	Samantha Pesantez
Toni Cunningham	Eric Katz	Kevin Rainsberger
Eitan Dayan	Adam Kofsky	Ben Rose
Russell Fogle	Leslie Johnson	Doug Schmidt
Abrielle Fuerst		William Welch

Miller South for the Visual and Performing Arts (Teacher Bonnie Wachter)

Alexis Berdine	Cristann Frazier	Hillary Martter
Meirra Birath	Leah Friedlander	Kati McGill
Julie Botnick	Leah Fulton	Hannah McIntyre
Nathan Brahce	Jake Goudy	Bryce Mitchell
Kaitlinn Brewer	Patrick Hall	Josh Nees
Jillian Bryson	James Hicks	Maggie Palunas
Raven Burdette	Aryn Hill	Erica Parmes
Rachel Carle	Kathleen Horrell	Jessica Peyton
Charles Tyler Cothren	Katherine Jetter	Megan Powley
Molly Cowperthwaite	Sarah Laferty	Steven Shell
Elizabeth Denholm	Cidney Lett	Nicole Shoenfelt
Benjamin DeShon	Drew Lindenberger	Mike Simonson
Emma Dontis	Anneliese Linnen	Shannon Thanasiu
Allyssa Dziurlaj	Molly Loar	Jamie Thompson
Logan Eisenhart	Sara Lute	Michael White
Marisa Espe	Mirko Mandic	Taylor Williams

Old Trail School (Teacher Jeffrey Eason)

Andrew Albert	Katherine O'Donnell
Shannon Davey	Amit Parikh
Anne Forhan	Anita Salley
Derek Fuenning	Lauren Smith
Alissa Gugliotta	Colin Stifler
Kevin Meisner	

St. Joseph School (Teacher Kathleen Burns)

William Bohnak	Andrew Padula	Rachael Tompkins
Rachel Bulgrin	Lucia Procaccio	Jessica Trushel
Hannah Bullock	Megan Perkowski	Caitlin Whaley
Francesca Gironda	Jessica Reiter	Kaitlin Wenmoth
Emily Maher	Lucille Shane	

Woodridge Middle School (Teacher Laura Rorrer)

Emily Allan	Samantha Parisi
Sarah Allan	Tara Sulzer
Kallie Durkit	Kelsey Tomlinson
Claire Kasper	Sarah Vechery
Samantha Leonino	Peter Weiss
Sarah Martter	Alyssa Woodcock
Caitlin Orchosky	

2005 City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest Participants Division II (grades 9 through 12)

Archbishop Hoban High School (Teacher Margot Eiseman)

Molly Dunlap	Natalie Petrosky
Sara Hannah	Cory Reed
Ian Henschen	Kaylee Ropchock
Areil Hoyt	Matt Samuels
Thomas Metzger	Patrick Van Auker

Ellet High School (Teacher Barb Baltrinic)

Corey Dwyer
Sean Reed

Firestone High School (Teacher Stephen Csejtey, Kristine Mogan & Judy White)

Nathan Burdette	Robbie Nelson
Deanna D'Amico	Sarah Swirsky
Jeremy Milford	Dominique Watkins
Adam Miller	

Green High School (Teacher Elaine Miller)

Leah Armbruster	Dan Harlan	Daniel Raies
Christopher Berry	Jack Hilton	Jackie Rankine
Kaylin Boehme	James Hilton	Katherine Reese
James Buetel	Christina Jaber	Aaron Ricks
Adam Calhoun	Jena Jenkins	Jamie Riedinger
Zachary Garman	Kyle Johnston	Kathryn Roberto
Daniel Charek	Leah Jubara	Colette Salem
Zachary Christy	Carrie Kayes	Jennifer Seloover
Kristina Culotta	Albert King	Justin Sims
Jonathan Denison	Annie Knight	Maggie Smith
Daniel Dobson	Daniel Lenart	Stephanie Spitzer
Lauren Donnelly	Theresa Louis	Tristanne Staudt
Danielle Fezell	Joshua Martin	David Steinkirchner
Jessica Foley	Renee Martinez	Ryan Swartz
Shalagh Frantz	Kelly Mason	Riane Thrasher
Lee Gibson	Dan Menyes	Holly Watkins
Tiffany Gordon	Alex Moseley	Trevor Westbrook
Jeffrey Hall	Whitney Parnell	Katie Zehner

Kenmore High School (Teacher Pat Smith)

Aaron Bond	Brittany Pearl
Isaiah Chapman	Haley Railsback
Glenn Clark	Celeste Sykes
Todd Cook	Sarah Thissen
Jordan Davidson	Kara Thomas
Dominick Harper	Andrew Trent
Amanda Holmes	Katie Vujevich
Tanita Love	Tiffany Ward
Erick May	Matt Whitmire

Mogadore High School (Teacher Jen Ritch)

Deidre Parker

North High School (Teacher Jacquelyn Hovey)

Tyeson Miller

OHDELA (Teacher Nancy Allen)

Mary Allen

Revere High School (Teacher Mic Hayes)

Amy Corman

Kelly McKisson

Springfield High School (Teacher Nancy Michel)

Patricia Ange

Arin Archer

Kelsie Archer

Jenna Barry

Albert Benninger

Stephanie Cain

Timothy Carter

Leisa Clark

Keely Clary

Amanda Donatelli

Jessica Fergus

Richard Good

Melanie Hamilton

Matthew Haught

Kelly Hoelzle

Chas Holland

Sarah Lelonek

Marissa Loughry

Courtney Lowers

Monica M'Natt

Jessica Naus

Anh-Tu Nguyen

Chelsea Park

Amie Petit

Robert Reeves

Nick Reynolds

Brian Scarpitti

Jessica Shoemaker

Jessica Stall

Amanda Tepus

Ruth Turner

Joshua Wade

St. Vincent-St. Mary High School (Teacher William O'Neil & Pamela Godshalk)

Max Bedell

Elizabeth Benzie

Haleigh Berg

Louis Boltik

Evan Caruso

Ali Cook

Kelly Daly

Jean Demboski

Michael DiFeo

Ashleigh Galizio

Brandon Gifford

Johanna Hariharan

Vanessa Hemminger

David Kennedy

Katherine McDowell

Kara Mundy

Zachary Neumann

Mikaila Roberts

Kristin Schoenlein

Christina Stavale

Adrienne Sutton

James Totts

Michele Trecaso

Leo Walter

Sarah Walter

2005 City of Akron Holocaust Commemoration
Akron Summit County Public Library, Main Library
May 3, 2005

11:30 A.M. AWARDS CEREMONY

Welcome	Katie Wells Goodwin, Chair Chair, Holocaust Commemoration Committee
Mistress of Ceremonies	Carla Davis Holocaust Committee
Presenter:	Lici Calderon Holocaust Committee Katie Wells Goodwin

12 NOON COMMEMORATION CEREMONY

Invocation	Rabbi Stephen Grundfast Beth El Congregation, Akron, Ohio
Welcome	Katie Wells Goodwin, Chair Holocaust Commemoration Committee
Welcome of Officials	Billy Soule Assistant to the Mayor for Community Relations
Video Message	Donald L. Plusquellic Mayor, City of Akron
Introduction of "Best of the Best" Video Presentation	Billy Soule
Introduction of Guest Speaker	Lici Calderon
Guest Speaker	Sandra Roberts "The Paper Clip Project" Whitwell, Middle School, Whitwell, Tennessee
Candle Lighting Ceremony	Student Award Winners
Closing Remarks	Katie Wells Goodwin
Benediction	Rev. Melford Elliott, Pastor Greater Bethel Baptist Church, Akron, Ohio

Keynote Speaker Sandra Roberts

Sandra Roberts is an 8th grade social studies teacher from Whitwell, Tennessee, whose students participated in a Holocaust project whose goal was to collect six million paper clips to symbolize the lives lost during the Holocaust. To date the project has more than 13 million paper clips from around the world. "The Paper Clip Project", as it is now known, has received national media attention and was featured on "NBC Nightly News" and "The Jane Pauley Show." The project has received rave reviews from many communities here and around the world.



As social studies teacher, Ms. Roberts strives to teach her children the love of history and the value of looking into the past to find ideas for the future. She loves to take time out of her busy day to talk to students who appear to be down in the dumps or those who simply need a hug and a smile.

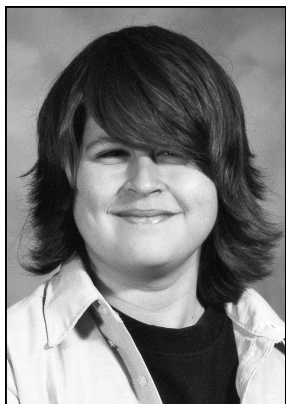
First and foremost, she believes that no child, regardless of race, color, or background, deserves to be treated unfairly. Ms. Roberts demands respect from all of her children, not only for herself, but also for each other. She does not allow unkind words to be hurled at others in her room and she works to achieve a level of fairness and trust in her classroom.

Ms. Roberts wants to be remembered as a teacher who strove to instill a sense of honor, self-respect, and kindness in everyone. She takes her job very seriously and works to prepare her children for the uncertainties of adulthood that everyone must go through. By doing so, she believes that her children will become the concerned leaders who will lead this country into the next millennium with honor and pride.

Ms. Roberts received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and her Master's Degree from Trevecca Nazarene University. She has been teaching since 1992 and is Co-Director of the Whitwell Middle School Holocaust Project.

"The Paper Clip Project has been the best project that I have ever been associated with. This project, which strives to teach tolerance, acceptance, and understanding, has taught so many children the value of looking past the color of a person's skin and looking at their soul. People from all around the world are helping us to teach our students, staff, community, and human beings in general, how hatred, ignorance, and apathy can result in something that will leave an indelible mark on generations. As a teacher, I have been given a challenge: to prepare my students to live in a world where violence, hatred, and racism are becoming as common as a cold. If I am to mold them into the powerful and empathetic leaders that will lead us into the 21st century, I must teach them about the mistakes that were made in the past. This project is helping to ensure that the leaders of our future know how to make all of our tomorrows better than our yesterdays."

-Sandra Roberts



Visual Art - Individual - Division I - 1st Place "Baggage of Discrimination"

By Nathan Brahce

Grade 7

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



My picture represents discrimination throughout the 20th century. The first person is a Jewish boy from the Holocaust, the second person is an African American from the Civil Rights movement, and the last person is a Muslim citizen in today's society. On the wall are pictures, text, and quotes that have something in common with the time period. The people don't have faces because in the time period that they represent most didn't or don't care who they are, just that they are a Muslim, a Jew or an African American. The suitcases represent discrimination. Each race throughout time has had to bear the pain of discrimination.



Visual Art – Individual – Division I - 2nd Place

"Will It Ever Change?"

By Maggie Palunas

Grade 6,

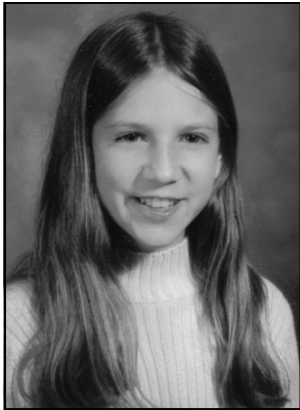
Miller South School for the Visual
and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



My painting shows two Holocausts. When someone mentions a holocaust you may have no idea that they mean the Salem Witch Trials or Columbine shootings. In this particular painting I have a girl surrounded by two Holocausts. You can not tell what Holocaust she experienced but you can tell it was painful by the scar and sad by the tear. Also there is a swastika surrounded by a thin red mist showing several places around the world, it also mists into the smoke of the Twin Towers to show that we have made a lot of evil very fast and we are taking our time getting rid of it.

(All winning entries can be seen on the City of Akron's Website at: www.ci.akron.oh.us/holocaust)



Visual Art - Individual - Division I - 3rd Place "Broken Tear"

By Molly Loar

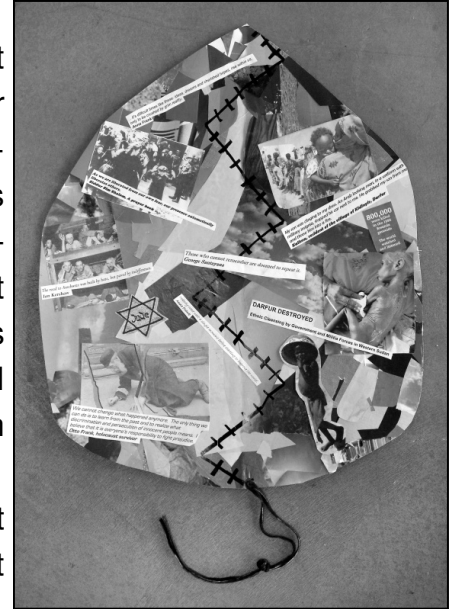
Grade 6

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter

My project is a tear-shaped collage. It consists of different layers of blue paper scraps. The line down the center represents the years between two horrible times in the world's history: the Holocaust, the famine in Rwanda and the holocaust going on in the Sudan. The stitches and the knot represent that these events are linked through humankind's indifference to suffering. It also indicates that the world still needs to learn from these events and to prevent them from happening again.

The same stitches and knot also are symbols of hope that the world can learn from its past mistakes and never repeat them again.



Visual Art – Individual – Division I - 4th Place "Broken Heart"

By Raven Burdette

Grade 6

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



This is a broken heart from the Holocaust and the World Trade Center. The broken heart symbolizes how hatred kills and destroys lives. Both the Holocaust and the World Trade Center tore apart the hearts of many, because of the loss of their loved ones. This is a collage of pictures of these tragedies.



The City of Akron Holocaust Commemoration

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE 2005

U.S. HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL COUNCIL

Sunday, May 1, 2005 through Sunday, May 8, 2005
“Lessons of the Holocaust: Reflections, Then and Now”

Visual Art - Collaborative - Division I - 1st Place “Not Again”

By Molly Cowperwaite & Leah Fulton

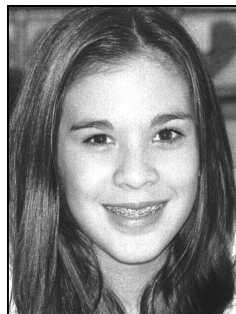
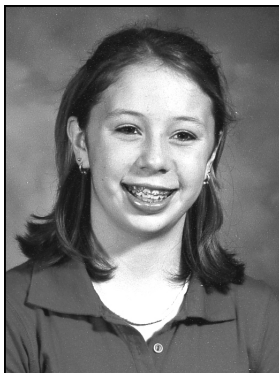
Grade 8

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



On the left half of the collage, everything is in black and white. All of these photographs represent the Holocaust. The right half of the collage is all in color. All of these photographs represent the current day even, September Eleventh. The small girl's transparent face represents all who were hurt during these two events. The girl standing on either side of the collage also represents the same thing. This girl is also one of the artists, Molly Cowperthwaite. This whole collage represents all of the horrible destruction that took place during these two events and all who hope for a better future.



Visual Art – Collaborative – Division I - 2nd Place

“Disasters In Time”

By Elizabeth Denholm, Alyssa Dziurlaj & Alexis Berdine (not pictured)

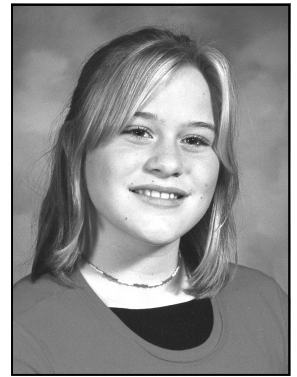
Grade 6

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter

This art piece is about a basket, which was a little girl's from the Holocaust in Europe. Her name was Isabelle Heyman. Later, this basket ends up in our current times when a little girl found it who had a fear of terrorists and 9/11. She then put her memories of tragedies

into this basket with Isabelle's things. This was to show that she knew of the sadness and horror that Isabelle went through even though the disasters in her life weren't as in Isabelle's life. She just wants Isabelle to know that she always has her heart to count on whether Isabelle is still living somewhere, or up in heaven.



This basket symbolizes tragedy. It shows that more wars and “holocausts” keep happening as we move through time. It shows that people still, and probably always will have hate for each other; whether a small disagreement or a large war. This basket shows a little about these girls and how they were caught up in a battle caused by hatred.



Visual Art – Individual – Division II - 1st Place (Tie)

“Wounds Won't Heal If You Keep Tearing Out The Sutures”

By Courtney Lowers

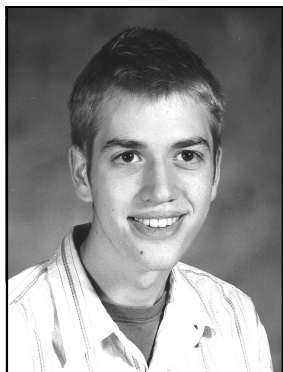
Grade 10

Springfield High School

Teacher: Nancy Michel



The Holocaust was an awful event that happened and once again, history is repeating itself in Sudan. The bloody handprint expresses the feelings of those who were in the Holocaust and the Africans represent the mass murder of the Sudanese.



Visual Art – Individual – Division II - 1st Place (Tie)

“Monopoly”

By Thomas Metzger

Grade11

Archbishop Hoban High School

Teacher: Margot Eiseman



To some, world politics is a game. They move their billionaire pieces around the board, picking and choosing which countries to buy out, which to move into and integrate, and which to take by force. Each country costs a certain amount of lives; undoubtedly, as history has proven again and again, take-overs of foreign countries are always bloody and leave innocent civilians dead. The price in lives for some countries on the board has been grossly underrepresented; some countries that have suffered just as much as others have been left out. It shows that sometimes people are ignored; however unjustly. Some are not aided by the more fortunate countries. The world is much bigger than that board game; in fact, it's more than big enough to accommodate everyone who is born into it with security and the guarantee to a shot at life.



Visual Art – Individual – Division II - 2nd Place

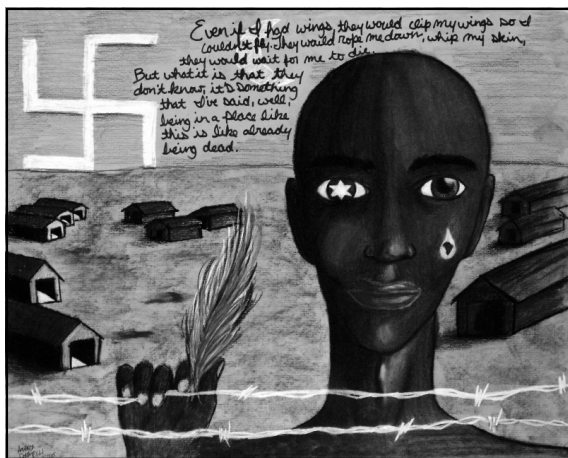
“You Can’t Escape Reality “

By Amanda Donatelli

Grade10

Springfield High School

Teacher: Nancy Michel



I chose this design because an event similar to the Holocaust is happening in Sudan. In the background, I drew a concentration camp. The man has a tear falling from his cheek with a tiny image of Africa within it. He has the Star of David in his eye to represent the symbol used for Jews during the Holocaust. The poem written in the sky is talking about if he had wings they would be clipped so he couldn't fly away. Like the Jews, he has no freedom, no voice, he has nothing to call his own anymore.

(All winning entries can be seen on the City of Akron's Website at: www.ci.akron.oh.us/holocaust)

Visual Art – Individual – Division II - 3rd Place

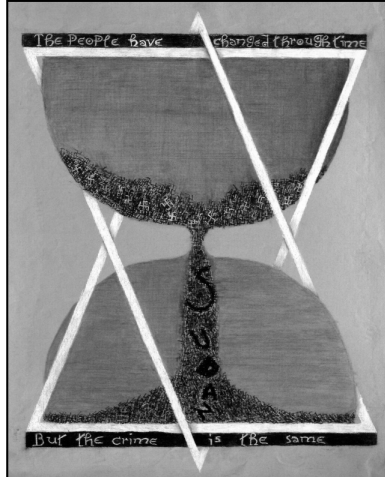
“Time For Change”

By Patricia Ange

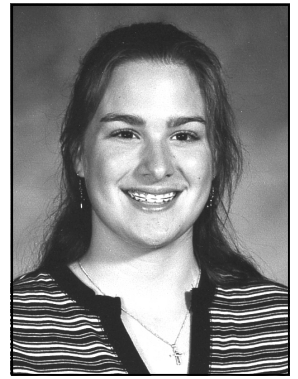
Grade10

Springfield High School

Teacher: Nancy Michel



My picture is supposed to convey the message that history can repeat itself and is doing so in Sudan. I replaced the grains of sand in the hourglass with Nazi Swastikas. In the bottom of the hourglass the swastikas come together to form the word “Sudan” which symbolizes that the people in Sudan are no better than the Nazis. The Star of David symbolizes that the victims in Sudan are as innocent as the Jews were. It doesn’t matter what year it is – genocide is genocide and it’s wrong.



Visual Art – Individual – Division II - 4th Place

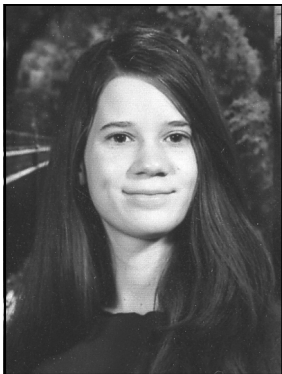
“Learn”

By Ariel Hoyt

Grade10

Archbishop Hoban High School

Teacher: Margot Eiseman



The destruction of past horrific events such as the Holocaust are reoccurring as similar horrors today. We have the power to prevent such terrifying things like genocide from continuing into the future. It would be a pity if we allow these awful things to ruin the future before anyone has the chance to experience it otherwise. Therefore, my message is this: learn from the past to create a better future.



Visual Art – Collaborative – Division II - 1st Place

“We Do Not Bleed”

By Evan Caruso & Mikaila Roberts

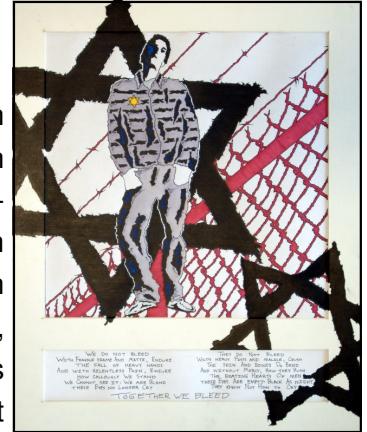
Grade12

St. Vincent-St. Mary High School

Teacher: William O’Neil



This piece is entitled We Will Not Bleed. It depicts a young modern adult wearing a typical concentration camp outfit. He is portrayed in front of the barbed wire fence and the Star of David. This picture accompanied with the poem shows how we have learned lessons from our actions over time. The individuals who are persecuted along with the ones who persecute do not bleed. Only as a group do we “bleed”, by becoming less human. The old holocaust uniform and idea shows “then”, while the modern cocky looking man portraying the “we will not bleed” ideal is now.



Visual Art – Collaborative – Division II - 2nd Place

“Education-The End of Global Terror”

By David Kennedy, Kara Mundy (not pictured) & Zachary Neumann

Grade12

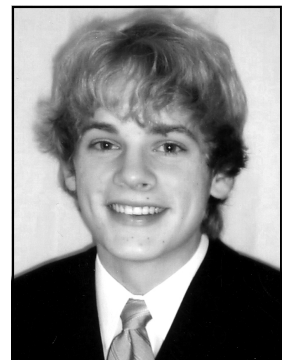
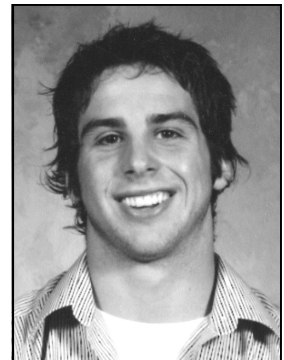
St. Vincent-St. Mary High School

Teacher: William O’Neil



Our art piece symbolizes the similarities between the Holocaust and the genocide occurring in the Sudan, Rwanda, and Uganda. It also offers a solution to the problem. The pictures on the globe are integral to the theme. Can you tell the difference in them? Besides the obvious color

difference, there is not much else that separates the looks of human desperation in the photos, both past and present. It is the same helplessness: the same need. The solution to the problem we believe, is education. Santayana’s quote brings much truth to the connection between the Holocaust and the African genocide. We feel that it is through education that the problem will be stopped.



Visual Art – Individual – Division II - Honorable Mention

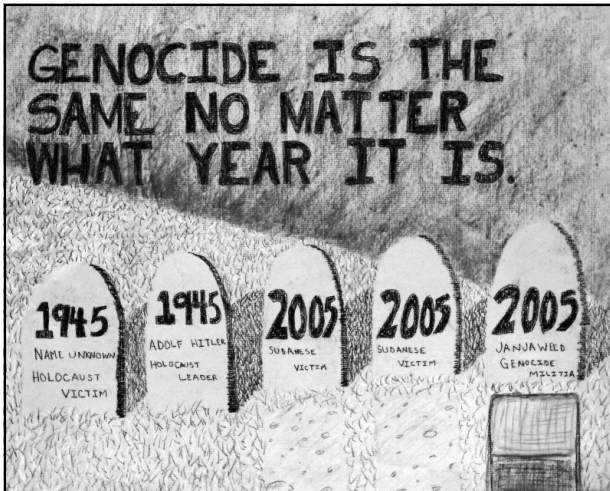
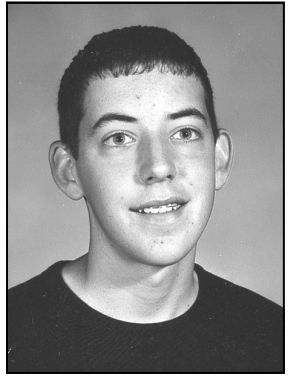
“Graves End”

By Chas Holland

Grade 10

Springfield High School

Teacher: Nancy Michel



My project is a picture of a hill with five tombstones on it. There are two from 1945 and three from 2005. On the 1945 tombstones, they are marked with a Holocaust victim and the Holocaust leader. The grass over them is grown in whereas the grass over the graves from 2005 is not grown over because it is still a fresh grave. The last grave on the right is still open because the Sudanese Government leaders have not met their downfall yet

Visual Art – Individual – Division II - Honorable Mention

“Genocides on End”

By Jeremy Milford

Grade 10

Firestone High School

Teacher: Steve Csejtey



I created this piece of art to let people know Genocide was not only committed during the Holocaust but right now on the other side of the globe. I want people to understand that one man and his powerful regime spread terror and now one man, his teachings and another powerful regime spreads its terror across their land against their own people. I created this to express how awful genocide is and how insane these regimes were to murder millions. People don't view genocide as an important conflict but as much as they want to believe it's not serious it is serious and it happens daily.

I used a variety of media in this work ranging from paints and markers to pencil and colored pencil. I set up my work as if I was creating a collage, using a variety of different pictures, from the Holocaust and the War on Terror and symbols like the Swastika the great symbol of terror, the Jewish Star of David and the SS Skull. I even used different languages such as Arabic and Deutsch. I set up the art as it would be easier for the viewer to point out what everything is. I hope this will give a pictorial understanding of genocide.

Visual Art – Individual – Division II - Honorable Mention

“Innocent”

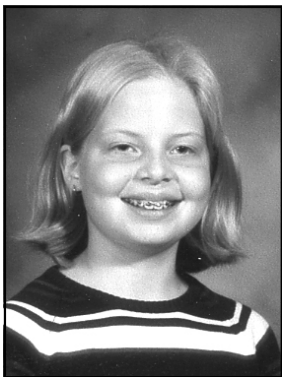
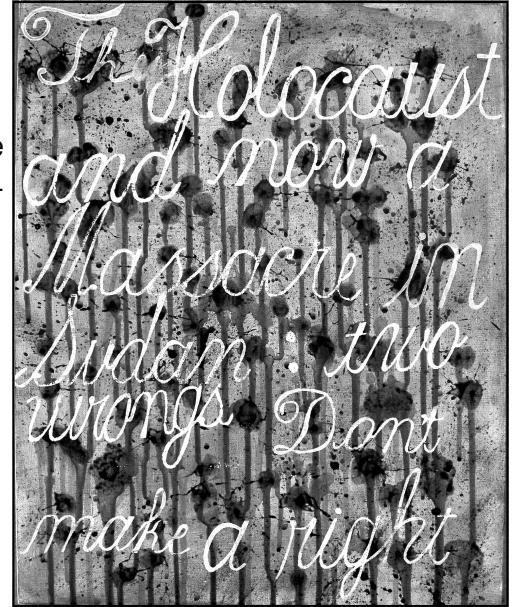
By Nick Reynolds

Grade 12

Springfield High School

Teacher: Nancy Michel

My work is mainly about the message. It interprets the theme because it talks of both the Holocaust then and Sudan now. The red represents the blood shed of innocence.



Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division I - 1st Place

“Will People Ever Learn?”

By Leah Friedlander

Grade 7

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



Will People Ever Learn?

Lessons of the Holocaust: Reflections of The and Now.
An Internet Selection.

Leah Friedlander
Miller South School
2005

(All winning entries can be seen on the City of Akron's Website at: www.ci.akron.oh.us/holocaust)

Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division I - 2nd Place

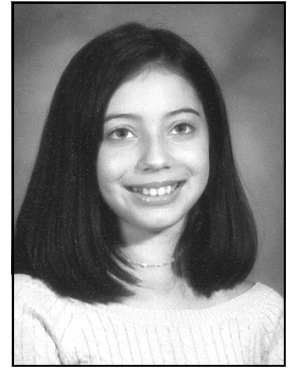
“History Repeats Itself”

By Annelise Linnen

Grade 8

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



I have written two pieces for two tragic events, the Holocaust and the on-going battle between Russia and Chechnya. My song for the Holocaust is very sad, in remembrance of a very horrible time in history. My song for Chechnya is chaotic to represent a very war-torn area that is still in an active battle. Russia continues to attack Chechnya. Civilians are being taken from their homes during the night, and are either kept or executed. Russia is constantly bombing many homes, cars, and buildings, killing many. One reason for these attacks is that Russia is trying to destroy any Muslim population still in Chechnya, just like the Nazis wanted to destroy Jews.. The situation in Chechnya is constantly being forgotten, and we must take action to stop this terrible holocaust from continuing any longer.

I am also dancing to my music. My music also represents the feeling and emotion of these two devastating holocausts. So keep your eyes and ears peeled to see the way history continues to repeat itself.

Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division I - 3rd Place

“The Holocaust and the War in Iraq”

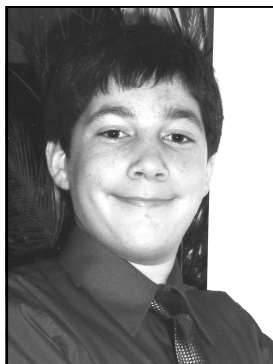
By James Hicks

Grade 8

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter

When I had to choose a present-day Holocaust to compare with the European Holocaust during World War II, I thought of one of the biggest ones. The War In Iraq. I chose this because it happened during my lifetime, and created a lasting effect on me and the others in my generation.



Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division I - 4th Place

“Discrimination”

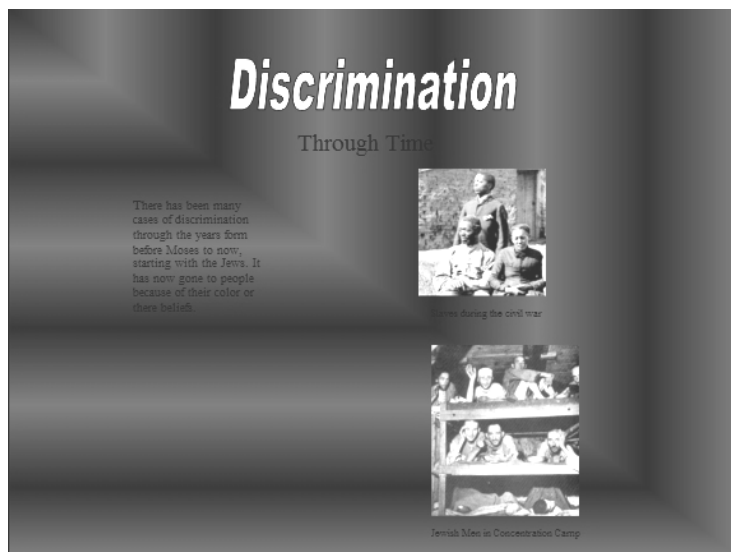
By Adam Kofsky

Grade 6

Lippman Day School

Teacher: Sarah Bricklin

My project is about discrimination. The lesson is that people have been judged by what they look like, their religion, or their color. That has to stop so it doesn't matter what somebody looks like or what their religion is because everybody is different. My slides show about the Holocaust and Slavery.



Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division I - Honorable Mention

“The Cycle Will Never End”

By Rachel Carle

Grade 6

Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter



I created this audio taped monologue to portray a person who lived through the Holocaust.

What motivated me to do this were the many stories that I read about the Holocaust and the survivors. They really touched me and I wanted to tell their stories. Everyone deserves a chance to have a story.

Creative Multimedia – Collaborative – Division I - 2nd Place

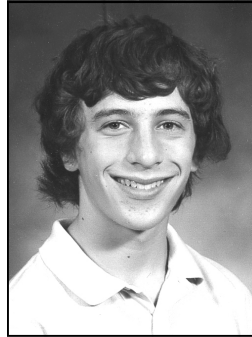
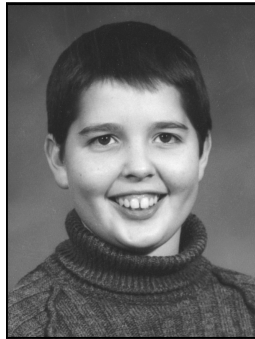
“It’s Morally Wrong to Stay Silent in the Face of Evil”

By Lawrence Anderle, Matthew Golden & Kevin Rainsberger (not pictured)

Grade 7 & 8

Lippman Day School

Teacher: Sarah Bricklin



Creative Multimedia – Collaborative – Division II - 1st Place BEST OF THE BEST

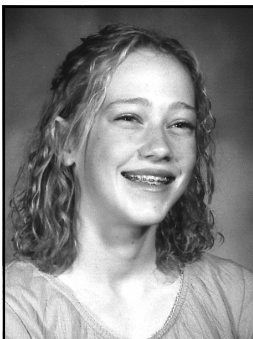
“Remember for the Future”

By Annie Knight, Holly Watkins & Trevor Westbrook (not pictured)

Grade 11

Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller



“Remember for the Future” is a video that outlines holocausts in this century and considers potentials for holocausts in the future. It illustrates the causes and effects of a holocaust through real photographs. It reflects on both the Holocaust during WWII and describes the genocide going

on in the Sudan right now. Similarities are found between the two holocausts and they are compared to life as it could be. Our video shows the potential of human life and stresses that it should be respected and preserved.

Creative Multimedia – Collaborative – Division II - 2nd Place

“Pictures From the Past”

By Carrie Kayes (not pictured), Jackie Rankine (not pictured) & Maggie Smith

Grade 11

Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller



Our presentation is a poem about the Holocaust, with pictures. Every line has a picture that somehow relates with it. The first 3 stanzas have pictures from the Holocaust with Hitler and the persecution of the Jews. The last stanza has pictures relating to the holocaust now and during the 80's. It is a short PowerPoint that is categorized in the media-media section.

Creative Multimedia – Collaborative – Division II - 3rd Place

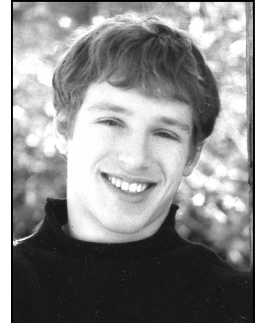
“Genocide: A Visual Reminder”

By Michael DiFeo and Michele Trecaso (not pictured)

Grade 12

St. Vincent-St. Mary High School

Teacher: William O'Neil



This presentation is a visual representation of genocide. It relates the past, the Holocaust, and the present, genocide in Africa. The sequence of the presentation first exhibits the Holocaust and then transitions to genocide today. The beginning reminds us of the horrific events of the Holocaust; it later brings us to the realization that genocide is happening today. The end of the presentation illustrates that there is no difference between then and now; something must be done and the only way to spark reaction is to present it in a way that brings the genocide to people's front door.

Creative Multimedia – Collaborative – Division II - Honorable Mention

“Lessons Learned”

By Lauren Donnelly, Kelly Mason & Collette Salem

Grade 11

Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller



Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division II - 1st Place

“Holocaust: A Collage of Lessons”

By Jonathan Denison

Grade 12

Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller



The Holocaust: A Collage of Lessons, relates to the potential lessons from the Holocaust to the present day using pictures and sound to appeal to the viewers' senses. Some of the pictures are graphic in nature, but exist to accurately show people what happened, how horrible it was, and to show them that things just as terrible as the Holocaust are going on today. By making the video, it was my hope to open people's eyes to the war crimes that are still being committed today, and to open their eyes to the need to stop these atrocities.

(All winning entries can be seen on the City of Akron's Website at: www.ci.akron.oh.us/holocaust)

Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division II - 2nd Place (Tied)

“The Question”

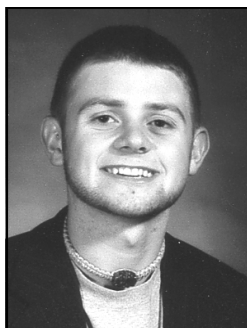
By Lee Gibson

Grade 12

Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller

This composition relates to the theme “Reflections: Then and Now,” in a symbolic nature. First there is the comparison between the song’s form and the theme. The song is a duet which in itself is a set of somewhat disjointed reflections. Furthermore, the song tells a story of a reflection in time and in man’s mind. The song starts with a slightly childlike theme. This represents a story that a young Jewish boy is told by his grandfather. Then as the song progresses the child grows up to be a man. Then just as the boy loses all memories of his grandfather’s stories, he enters Iraq. There he sees the same type of things happening and his memories return. Then, as the melody returns, he tells his stories to his children. Finally, the song ends on an inquisitive note asking the listener to introspect on the situation it has described.



Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division II - 2nd Place (Tied)

“Before Me”

By Zachary Christy

Grade 11

Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller

Creative Multimedia – Individual – Division II - 3rd Place

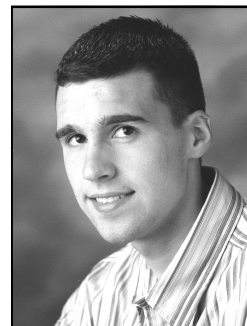
“The Holocaust: Then and Now”

By Corey Dwyer

Grade 12

Ellet High School

Teacher: Barbara Baltrinic



Creative Writing
Division I – 1st Place
"If Walls Could Talk..."

Francesca Gironda
Grade 8, St. Joseph School
Teacher: Kathleen Burns



If walls could talk, what would they say
about the killing of Jews in every torturous way?

If walls could talk, what would they say
about the Holocaust and the Nazis who made it
that way?

If walls could talk, what would they say
about the death camps and mass burials that
remain to this day?

If walls could talk, what would they say
about the inhumane treatment that continues
each day?

If walls at the death camp in Treblinka could talk,
here is what we would say....
We would scream in pain for the countless,
innocent people who died each day.

We would wonder and question why the Nazi
regime ever created such a horrible place.
We would mourn the senseless killing of innocent
Jews, such a timeless, historical disgrace.

We, the walls felt the agony. We wish that we
could have spared the sorrow and pain.
If only we could have stopped the millions from
dying, all for one man's personal gain.

If walls could talk, we would share the stories
of a tortured race,
Remembering that we saw the suffering on
every innocent face,
A memory the world will never erase.

If walls could talk, we would tell the world that we
are responsible for making it a safer place.
We need to protect and preserve the rights of the
entire human race.

The Holocaust seems so long ago, memories that
time may have allowed to fade away.
But yet, that very same type of genocide still
exists in places like Bosnia and Iraq today.

It is our responsibility to ensure that such torture
will never occur in our modern day.
We must protect fellow mankind from dictators like
Saddam and Milosevic, the Hitlers of today.

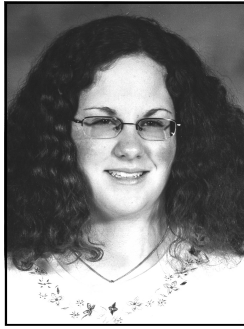
The walls of Treblinka have spoken. We must
never allow this atrocity to occur again,
The modern day world cannot permit such killing
and brutality, such a reproachable sin.

The walls of Treblinka have seen the unthinkable
in the Holocaust and in modern day.
We have seen what we have thought impossible
in each and every way.

Mankind needs to make certain that no innocent
man, woman or child will ever suffer again.
These walls need only to see the peace, love and
compassion that should exist among all men.

Now that the walls have told this sad and tragic
story, a story from deep within,
As we reflect and remember, we are morally
responsible to never allow this again.

Creative Writing
Division I – 2nd Place
“The Never-Ending Story”
Lucille Shane, Grade 8
St. Joseph School
Teacher: Kathleen Burns



As I was reading a book about World War II and the Holocaust, I was sobbing. I could not imagine the horrors that those poor souls went through.

Then, all of sudden, a little girl walked up to me. Her hair was chopped short, and she was wearing the same striped uniform that the concentration camp prisoners would wear. She looked starved. Her eyes were sunken into her face. I could see every one of her bones where there was exposed skin.

She whispered to me, ‘Let me show you something. This is something no book can tell.’ She motioned for me to follow her. I looked at her questioning, but I followed. As soon as I took one step, I sank.

It was dark. The walls around me were closing in. I was trapped in deep, sticky mud. And then, I came free. I could feel the fresh air permeating my lungs.

I looked around me. I did not know where I was, but I was frightened anyway. Then the little girl gestured towards a sign at a big black gate. It read ‘Auschwitz’. I was in the Auschwitz Death Camp! I whirled around to look at the little girl. I was furious. But she merely smiled at me and told me that my time here would be short.

‘You are one of us now. There is no escape. I myself am already dead. My body is over there in that pit.’ She pointed toward a muddy pit filled with dead and emaciated bodies. And truly, she was there.

‘So you are a ghost?’ She shook her head no. ‘I am a voice that will not be stilled. You are here to listen to my story. After you hear mine, you will have a mission. That mission will be to tell the world that they must prevent this from happening.’ Before I could say another word, she passed her hand in front of my eyes.

We were in a comfortable Polish home. A mother and a father and two little (twin) girls. She pointed them all out to me. Mama, Papa, me – Ina Polski, and my sister – Mina Polski. She turned to me. ‘We were so happy. And then, everything was

‘*gegangen*’, gone.’ I noticed tears in her eyes.

All of a sudden, soldiers burst through the door. They had rifles in their hands and were shouting for the family to get out. They were rushed out of the door. Ina waved her hands, and we were gone, following the family.

**

We were now on a train. It smelled of human excrement and everyone was packed in very tightly. I was disgusted. Then the train came to a stop. German soldiers shouted, ‘*Gehen Sie von dem Zug weg! Kommen!*’ – Get off the train! Come! And we were herded like cattle off of the train.

The women and men were separated. We followed the women. They were made to strip off all their clothes, put all their valuables in a bin, and sit down on cold cement blocks to have their hair shaved off. Women were screaming, sobbing. I backed into a corner. This alone was enough to humiliate anyone.

The women were then forced to walk onto a mustering block. They were tattooed with a number on their forearms. From here on, they would be known only by their number. I wanted to take their place. I wanted to comfort them. But I could only stand there helplessly.

They were separated even further. Two lines. One right, the other left. If you were fit and able to work, or had a special skill, then you would go to the right. If you were elderly, or sickly, then you would go to the left. Luckily, Ina, her sister Mina and her mother all stayed together. Their mother was a seamstress, and they, those poor creatures, were identical twins.

The next morning, they stood outside, waiting for the doctor to make sure they were healthy, they stood close together. But when the doctor saw that the two six year olds were identical twins, he snatched them from their mother. Ina’s mother screamed and clawed to get her children back, but the German soldiers beat her back into line. She stood there, barely able to hold herself up. She raised her tearstained face up to the heavens as if to pray.

Ina said to me, ‘The grief killed my mother. A few days after we were taken away, she died in her sleep. The doctor told us so.’ Ina said, ‘Follow.’ So I did.

We were in a dark, hellhole of a room. There were wooden cages set up. Already, there were six pairs of identical twins packed tightly in the cages. Ina and her sister were put in tiny cages. They were lucky enough to be put close enough so that they could touch each other’s fingers.

'I was the control, and my sister was the one they experimented on. She never told me what went on, so I could only guess. But I want to know now.' I tried to stop her, because I knew what they did, but she refused to listen to me. So I followed, with a sick stomach.

We entered the 'surgery' room. The patient on the table was not Ina's sister, but some other poor soul. It was a little boy. We watched, horrified, as the 'doctor' performed some procedures on the poor thing. Cruel knives glittered in the lamplight. Chemicals stuck to the inside of my nose. I put my hand on her shoulder. We turned, and left.

She looked at me. 'I wish I had not found out.' And she told me, 'About two weeks after they started the experiments, my sister never came back. I was frightened. They had no use for me anymore. I was sent out to make it on my own. I could not. One day, I just lay down in the mud. I closed my eyes, and dreamt that I was far away. And then I died. It was that simple. But now I have been sent back to tell you all about it.'

She led me over to a cement block. This was the 'hospital block'. We went inside. She said she wanted to show me how the 'tot' – dead, would look at you, screaming at you to help them, to tell their story, to tell their families that they will see them soon. '*Die Augen der Toten*' – the eyes of the dead. They told me their stories. They were nice Jews or Christians, minding their own business, when Hitler came and demolished their lives. They were angry, but most of all, were sad. They were sad because they were not with their families or friends. They had no food in their stomachs. And yet no one heard their cry. Or came to their aid. I knew I would be haunted from here on out by those eyes.

Many survivors today refuse to talk about it because of the things that happened to them and the things that they did to stay alive. The guilt and hopelessness can deeply hurt a person. Make them go insane. Listen to what I have said, and help others to realize this cruelty.'

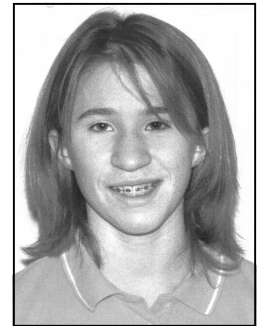
I started to weep. She told me not to weep for her and the victims, but to weep for all the new victims of genocide today. Just to remember the past victims, and use that lesson for today.

Ina said to me, 'This is to be our goodbye. But before you go, I want to show and tell you something. Look at the children. Look at their starved bodies, and how sad and hopeless they look. You need to help prevent this from ever happening again. That is what you were destined to do.'

I woke up! I sat up straight in bed. My nightshirt was soaked in sweat. What a horrible dream! But I knew I would not have had it if it did not mean anything. So, I decided that I would speak out about it.

I did. I wrote letters and made telephone calls to government agencies in Rwanda, the Sudan, Bosnia, and many other countries. I urged them to investigate the genocide that was occurring in their countries. I do not know if I had any effect, but I sincerely hope so. But letters were not my only forms of trying to prevent these atrocities from repeating themselves. I prayed to God every day, for the victims of genocide, both in the past, and now in the future. Perhaps with many other people's help, including prayer, this never – ending story will end.

Creative Writing
Division I – 3rd Place
"The War Inside"
Emily Maher, Grade 8
St. Joseph School
Teacher: Kathleen Burns



A Second...
 A Minute...
 An Hour...
 A Day...
 A Week...
 A Month...
 A Year...
 They Prayed....

Infants...
 Children...
 Teenagers...
 Mothers...
 Fathers...
 Sisters...
 Grandparents...
 Brothers...
 Families Once Together...
 Now Torn Apart...
 Their Hearts Ripped To Pieces...

Work...
Blood...
Sweat...
Tears...
All These above...
Cannot be compared to their Fears...

Food....
Love...
Happiness...
Hope...
Only a Reality inside their dreams...

Bodies...
Bones...
All those left behind...
Their fate...
Their life...
A matter of time...
To many they were of no such importance...
A waste of humanity...
Offensive...
Imperfect...

Who were they...?
What are they...?
Well just a number...

Raped...
Killed...
Mutilated...
Deserted...
Their remains burned and thrown as if they
were worthless...

Death to them was nothing new...
They knew there was not much they could do...
But to them it was like an escape...
They would no longer suffer...
And knew they would return somewhere safe...

Here I am...
A soldier that was there...
A soldier of the Holocaust...
A soldier of the Sudan...
A soldier of Kosovo...
Witnessing it all without a care...
My heart cold as steel...
My love all drained out...

But I saw...
I watched...
I killed...
I sought...
Realizing now that I am weak...

The war inside me cannot be won...
There is too much guilt on my soul for the
wrongs I have done...

Creative Writing Division I – 4th Place

"The Locket"

Rachel Bulgrin, Grade 8

St. Joseph School

Teacher: Kathleen Burns

I sat up and looked around: Today was September 3, 1939, and I had spent most of last night in my basement. The Nazis had invaded my homeland. As I sat up, I heard the unthinkable. The people shouted in the streets, Heil Hitler, Heil Hitler." The Germans had won. They had defeated our soldiers in my homeland, Bielitz. My world shattered: Hitler had come to my homeland: I opened my blinds and peered out into the streets. The scene that greeted me was almost too much for me to endure. The streets were ruined. Windows had been shattered, and dead men were scattered in the streets. I closed my eyes and counted to ten. Maybe when I opened my eyes everything would be back to normal. I slowly opened my eyes and realized that no wishing could ever undo this terrible disaster.

Nearly a year has passed since that awful day when Hitler's Nazis took over our town. Now the Jews are not allowed to own cars and other expensive things. They even made us turn in our fountain pens. I now have to attend a special school for Jews and am not allowed to go to many public places.

As I sit at our kitchen table imagining that I am fixing myself something to eat other than bread, I can not help but be filled with despair. The Germans took all of our food and we have almost nothing. When my mother enters the room, I quickly drop the bread I am holding. I do not want her to scold me, and tell me yet again that if I eat too much, we will have nothing. But instead of yelling, she quickly and awkwardly walks across the room and hugs me tightly. This seems odd to me now because my mother has not hugged me since the war started. Although I want to ask her what is wrong, I just stand there enjoying the moment of affection. She wipes a tear from her eye

(All winning entries can be seen on the City of Akron's Website at: www.ci.akron.oh.us/holocaust)

and stares blankly at me. After a long moment, she begins to explain that she has received word that the family will be relocated to a concentration camp within the week. From everything that we have heard, we know that this is the place where Jews are sent to die.

Next, she gives me a look that leads me to believe that there may still be reason to hope. She whispers, "We must go into hiding. There is a nice family that can take one person." "Only one. Eva do you understand what I am saying?"

I cover my ears. I understand perfectly that I have to go while they stay here and let the Nazis take them away. They are sacrificing their lives for me. I begin to cry, "Mama, I do not want to leave you! I want to stay with you and Papa!"

"Of course you do, sweetie," Mama replies, "but they will take us away, and if they find you, I fear they will kill you. Will you please be strong for your papa and me?"

I stare at the ground wishing I could throw myself down and scream and cry, like when I was little. However, looking up into my mother's face I know I must be strong. If I cry it will kill her. I must be strong. I force myself to smile weakly and hug her silently.

My mother reaches up to her neck and takes off her golden locket. It is the one possession of value that has not been stolen or sold for food. She places it in my hand and says, "Eva, I want you to take this. When you wear it, no matter where you are, I want you to remember that your father and I will always love you."

I have admired my mother's beautiful locket with her initials carved on the back since I was a little girl. As tears form in my eyes, I cannot believe that Mama is giving it to me. I look up at her and smile as tears fall down my cheeks. "I thought you said it would be my wedding present."

She gives me a weak smile. "I know, honey. But after the war, you may already be married."

I know that she and Papa will not fight when the Nazis come. I am certain that we will not see each other again in this life. I love Mama and Papa so much. How will I bear all of this? I hug Mama in silence, and we stand together in the kitchen for a long time.

That night I look around my room to decide what to bring with me into hiding. I do not have much left anyway. Would it be just me, or would others be in hiding with me? Where was I going? These were all questions I want to ask my mother or my father, but I know that if I speak, I will only be hurting them more. As I climb into my bed and smooth out my pillow, I pray a silent prayer to God that he will

spare my parents and that I will be with them again after the war. I hold the locket in my hands and try to think of the good times my family has had together.

However, no matter how hard I try to remember the good times, I can only think about the fact that I may never see my parents again.

As I sleep I dream that my parents and I are walking along a beach together having a wonderful time. However, my dreams are interrupted by a loud sharp knock at the door. I sit straight up in my bed, terrified. Who would be coming to call at this hour? I hear a man talking fast in German. My mother is crying, and my father is yelling. Then I realize that the stories are true; soldiers do come at night and take people away. Had not Mama said they were coming in a week?

I run out of my room in a panic and see the German soldiers destroying our home as they look for valuables. One of the soldiers barks at me that I have five minutes to gather my things. Mama hands me a bag and whispers for me to take warm clothes because it is cold tonight. I run into my room not knowing what to take. This should not be happening. I am supposed to go into hiding. I am supposed to live. My parents made plans for me! As I begin to pack clothes, I run my fingers across Mama's locket. I tell myself that I will wear it until I die.

I walk out of my room, wishing I could cry, but I don't want to let the SS soldiers see me cry. When I enter the living room, Mama hands me my big winter coat and wraps her arms around me. We are led outside to where a large truck was waiting for us. As we climb into the back of the truck, I hear a woman crying and a man trying to comfort her. I want to ask her if she has had a daughter taken away too. I sit down and begin to cry silently to myself. As tears stream down my cheek, I wonder if maybe I am lucky to at least be with my parents. However, I know that I am young and weak. I will be of no use to the German at their work camp.

When we arrive at the camp, I notice that there is something written above the door. *Work brings freedom!* I step out onto the platform, and the soldiers begin to roughly divide us into two lines. Papa grabs my hand and holds on as tight as he can. When a soldier approaches us, Mama and Papa are placed in one line, and I am pushed into the other. I stand tall and refuse to let Mama see me cry. Mama begins to scream. Papa yells that I will be fine, but his eyes tell me differently. We walk over to long brick buildings that are labeled "Showers." The soldiers tell us to take off our clothes and empty our belongings into a box. A mean looking woman with an emotionless face and

cold eyes reaches forward and yanks the locket off my neck. I begin to sob, but no one heard my cry!

"I remember what happened on my last night at home, " I share with my new friends at the resettlement camp. We all share our stories to pass the time as we sit uncomfortably on the mud floor of our tent, hoping that the Americans will soon allow us to go home where we belong. We were ethnic Albanians from Serbia, forced to live here in Montenegro until the Serbians could be forced to allow our return.

"I remember the singing...Happy birthday dear Ivana, Happy birthday to you."

"Blowout your candles, honey, and make a wish."

As I closed my eyes I thought of the wish that had been lingering in my heart for as long as I could remember. I hoped I would be safe this year and that the Serbians would stop killing the Albanians that live in Serbia. There had been rumors circulating that men like my Papa were being killed and women and children being hurt. As I opened my eyes and blew out the candles, my fears were relieved for the moment. There were my mother and father looking at me with love and compassion in their eyes.

"Open your gift, honey," my father said.

He handed me a neatly wrapped gift with a large blue bow. As I unwrapped it, I could not guess what it was. I knew it could not be anything too expensive. My father's business had been suffering lately. Although my parents never liked to talk about it, I knew things had been bad, and I knew it was because we were Albanians.

"Oh Papa," I exclaimed as I looked at the beautiful gold locket. It was beautiful. I knew it must have cost more than we could afford.

"Sorry that it doesn't have your initials in it. I found it in a flea market," Papa explained.

"Oh, I love it," I exclaimed. I turned it over to study the back. The initials were hard to make out. "I think it says I.A.B.," I said. As I throw my arms around my father's neck, I felt the happiest I had felt in weeks.

"Do you like it?" my mother asked.

"Oh yes, I love it," I said happily.

"Well then, shall we cut the cake?" my father asked.

As he got up to get a knife from the kitchen cupboard, a knock sounded at the door. It was an angry sounding knock, not like the greeting of a neighbor or a friend.

"I will be right back," Papa said quickly. I looked at my mother in fear and I noticed that she was also

afraid. Within seconds of opening the door, two armed men burst in and grabbed my father. "Come with us," they said, "Or we will kill your wife and child."

My mother began to cry. I wanted to yell and scream at these terrible men, but my father gave me a reassuring nod, which seemed to say, "Be still."

My father let out a sigh and said, "Very well, may I get my coat? It is cold."

"You won't need it," they said in rough tones as they led my father away. I began to cry. Why was this happening? What had my father done?

As I heard cries and yelling coming from the other homes on our block, my mother whispered, "Ivana, we must leave."

"Why?" I said. "What about father?"

"He will not be coming back," she choked out through tear filled eyes.

Suddenly, I understood, the rumors had been true. People were actually killing people for just being different. Because we were different and did not believe what they did, we must die.

"You must pack your things quickly," Mama barked.

"What should I bring?"

"Warm clothing. Pack only what you can carry, and hurry. Go as fast as you can. Those men may come back looking for us after they.... they..."

I knew what she could not say. As I ran upstairs to my room, I remembered all of the hushed conversations I heard from my mother and father's room while I was in bed. But something had told me that they never believed it could really happen to us. As I gathered all of my winter clothing, I felt for the locket. It was still in my hands, and I put it around my neck. I could not help but wonder if the previous owner of this locket had ever been as frightened as I was that night.

"Please help me," I prayed silently.

"Ivana, we must go now."

"I am coming, Mama," I said.

As we put on our winter coats I asked her where we were going.

"We are going west, out of Serbia. I hear talk of camps in Montenegro where we will be safe."

"Mama, I heard from Anna that they would not let us cross the border."

"We have no other choice. If we stay here we will die...or worse. ." Mama's voice trailed off and I knew exactly what she meant.

"We are walking all the way from Prizen to Montenegro?" I asked.

"Yes, Ivana, now we must hurry. They will be back for us."

As we walked out the door, I could not help but notice that she did not lock up the house I knew that the men would be back to steal what little valuables we had left. As we walked, I heard gunshots and knew my father's fate. Once again, I reached for the locket and wondered who its previous owner had been. Did she know the pain of knowing that someone she loved was gone and she would never see him again? Somehow, holding onto that locket gave me hope.

I do not remember much of the walk, except that we were always cold and hungry. But the locket gave me hope. It seemed that no matter how cold or hungry I was, the locket gave me strength. When I touched the locket, it seemed as though an invisible person was urging me on, telling me to fight for my life.

When we finally reached the border, our group had to bribe the border patrol to let us through. Everyone handed over anything that was of any value. When I began to take off my locket, the patrolman told me not to bother with that old thing. He did not realize the gift he gave me that night.

Once we arrived at the camps, we were given food and new clothes. I still remember the way I felt when I told mother about the locket as we settled in. She said the strength came from Papa. I, however, felt that it had come from somewhere else. Maybe there had once been another girl...

Creative Writing Division I – Honorable Mention

"On the Wings of Eagles"

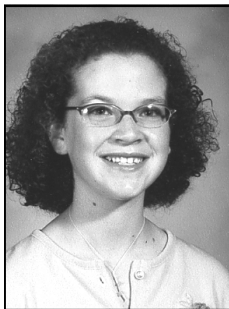
Julie Botnick

Grade 7, Miller South School

Teacher: Bonnie Wachter

Germany, 1939

I had witnessed these things before, of course. The random gunshots in the street of the ghetto below our dingy flat, the brutal beatings, and worst of all our synagogue being destroyed, with brave people running in and being consumed by the licking flames like a hungry predator on its prey, trying to save our sacred texts from the jaws of the beasts. I knew this was all happening, yet I had felt a slight certainty that it would all end, that I would wake up from this nightmare to see my father again, who had been taken to a work camp three months ago.



But here, I am, in a Nazi-drawn oxcart, too crowded to even sit down, with poor souls who had died of starvation and of fear itself lying at our feet. I was standing next to Helena, my sister. Although she was nearly two years older than me, nearly 15 she was, I was always the braver of us. Our Oma used to say to me, "You're braver than them. Don't let them bring you down." She said that to me every day until we were separated into these carts by age. I didn't say "I love you" enough.

I held Helena's hand. She was crying. She tried to wipe her eyes so I would not think she was scared. She was always trying to act so brave, but I could see her tear streaked cheeks. She looked so much like Mama, she reminded me of her. I couldn't bear the thought that I might never see either of them again.

Plaszow loomed in the distance, getting nearer with each monotonous roll of the wheels. It had been a hard journey, and I was weak with hunger. A general barked an order in German and we filed out of our transport. I still held Helena's hand. Another officer called out about ten names, none of which I recognized. The rest of us were marched into barracks. I later was told that those ten were shot as a demonstration of what they could do. I did not spot Mama or Oma. Maybe they were taken to Auschwitz.

Later that evening, after a meager supper of some stale bread and broth, a roll call, a sort of a reveille, was scheduled. Helena and I walked hand in hand to the other end of the big field, with a group of about fourteen other girls.

The Nazi general I had seen before was holding up a list, looking kind of puzzled and annoyed at the same time. I could also see the familiar bulge of money in his pocket, like what Papa used to bring home from his store on a good day, before it was taken over by a Nazi war profiteer. He started calling out names. I couldn't even imagine the fates of these people.

I couldn't understand how people could kill for the sake of killing like the Nazis did. About one thousand names had been called so far, and I was feeling worse and worse with every name, until my trance was broken by the general's gruff voice.

"Helena and Else Wildstein, engraving and paint specialists. Sadek Wilk, metal engineer. Abram..." Helena and I froze as our names were called. I felt sick in the stomach and we were too scared to even cry. "You who I called, come forward. Mr. Oscar

Schindler has personally given me this list of all of you to work in his factory. Your skills in your trade are necessary for the war effort. In the morning, you will be taken to his factory. Now all of you back to the barracks!" He ended his speech and we headed back, with new hopes, but even more new fears.

The next morning, 1200 of us were taken to the factory of the infamous Mr. Schindler, who, I heard from another girl, drank and gambled. I wandered if he was taking another gamble with our lives. When we got to the Emalia factory, we were taken to a large room, the silence broken only by the whirring of machinery. We were too scared to speak.

"Welcome, my children, to my factory," he began, and his voice was gentle, sincere, not at all what I had expected from the stories I heard, and the giant Nazi arm band he wore. "I have taken you all from Plaszow, to help you, to save you, from the brutality of the Germans. You will be safe here, however long this war wages and continues to take its toll on the innocent. Welcome, again, to my factory." With that, he and his wife left the room, and I knew they were sincere in their words, not like the wry, scheming words I had heard so many times before. He reminded me of Oma's favorite Bible verse from Exodus, "I bore you up on the wings of eagles." she said that it reminded her that there was good in the world, in every person, if only they had the chance show it. She would have been proud of Oscar Schindler. She would have looked beyond his world of sin, saying he hadn't had the chance before. Although I will never fully understand why he did it, he will always truly be a hero in my eyes.

Rwanda, 1994

"Goodbye, Ema," I whispered as I set a smooth round stone I had found in the river next to the cemetery on her grave. I had lived in Israel most of my life. I was born in Rwanda, as a Tutsi, but Ema had soon adopted me. The only daughter of a Schindler Jew, she was generous to all, remembering the act of kindness Schindler showed toward the Jews during the Holocaust. Now that she was gone, I was going back to Rwanda to see the only family I know of, my second-cousin Tatiana, who was married to a hotel manager.

I boarded the plane, crying, not wanting to leave my mother and my home, and uncertain of what the future held.

When I got to the hotel, I could immediately sense

carrying guns, and the roads were stained with blood. I rushed inside to find 1,200 tall, skinny Tutsis and short, stocky Hutus mulling about, pacing and muttering. I found Tatiana, and she told me about the killings of the Tutsis by the Hutus, and how her husband, Paul, had opened the hotel as a refugee camp for Tutsis and Hutus that refused to fight. I had not heard about these things, because Western governments refused to call the brutality of the Hutus, who at the peak of the killings were murdering nearly 8000 people a day, a genocide, so that they would not have to interfere. I felt almost spoiled, that I was living in peace, while the unrest in Rwanda was going on unnoticed.

I have been brave all my life. Ema said that I take after my grandmother. But as I sat there, listening to Tatiana, I felt shattered, and I felt small, as if a protective shell around me was breaking.

"Tatiana, will they find me here?" Although I was new to Rwanda, I was still a Tutsi, the ethnic group the Hutus were trying to cleanse Africa of, the reason for this holocaust.

"No, you are safe here. Here, take this key to a room on the third floor. It's been a long day for the both of us." She handed me a key with the number 323 engraved on it.

As I walked through the hotel to my room, put the key in the knob, and turned the handle, I heard a gunshot go off in the street below the hotel, and the sound of a child crying. I ran down the steps to find a boy, about seven years old, kneeling beside the body of his mother. I picked him up and carried him to my room. As I tried to console him, I thought about what Tatiana had said, about the rest of the world not caring. Won't we ever learn? How could a holocaust happen again? Didn't we promise to never let anything so horrific commence? I also thought about her husband, Paul, who is risking his life to save the lives of 1200 Rwandans.

I recalled the chapter from Exodus that Ema used to read to me every night, about how God bore the Hebrews out on the wings of eagles. I thought of how Paul must be the eagle, protecting the Rwandans from the shadow of death by the Hutus. His acts compared to the acts of Oscar Schindler, who, many years before him, saved the lives of Jews from the Nazis. They are heroes in my eyes. They are the protectors from death, from the Holocausts of the century. They are the flickering of hope in the world of hate and fear. They are the difference. They are the wings of the eagles.

Afterward

My story is based on the comparative events of Oscar Schindler during the European Holocaust, and Paul Rusesabagina in the Rwandan Holocaust. Their actions, combined, saved about 2400 people. These righteous people risked their lives to help others. They are both recognized and honored today as heroes of their times. The movies Schindler's List and Hotel Rwanda portray these heroes. While no one knows exactly why Schindler, a sinning Catholic Nazi, helped the Jews, everyone agrees that what he did was amazing, spending all his money and risking his life to help Jews. Their wives, Emilie Schindler and Tatiana Rusesabagina, although not given as much credit, deserve recognition as helpers, also. The bible verse comes from the haftarah of the Torah portion of Jethro, from Exodus. It was the inspiration for my story.

Creative Writing

Division I – Honorable Mention

“The Sweet Sound of Freedom”

Tommy Hickman

Grade 8, Hyre Middle School

Teacher: Patty Bodine

My name is Otto Sokolowski.
I am 13 years old and the date is Jan 12, 1942.
My family and I are amongst the millions
condemned by Hitler during this “war to
end all wars”, World War II.
I am Jewish.

My name is Sentwali Ubwoko.
I am 13 years old and the date is May 3, 1994.
My family and I are amongst the hundreds of
thousands condemned by the Hutu's
during Rwanda's uprising.
I am of the Tutsi tribe.

It is bitter cold, we have no coats or shoes
because we were pulled from our beds in
the middle of the night.
Our town leaders were hanged before our
eyes as a warning to the Jewish population
to comply with all orders.
These murderers have tricked us into thinking
we are going on a vacation.

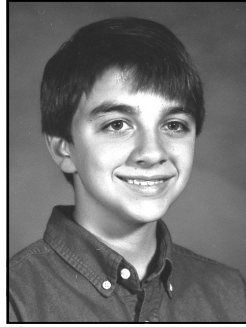
By Hitler's orders the SS soldiers have
loaded us onto a train like cattle
going to slaughter.
The train will take the Sokolowski family to
the Dachau death camp.

It is blistering hot, and we have no cover
to protect us from the wicked desert sun.
Our homes were overtaken by Hutu, and we
are left to starve in the desert.
As we gathered to worship, our church
was invaded and many of our village
leaders were murdered.
We never thought they would attack
in the house of God.
At the hands of the Hutu the women
and children in my family have been
tortured in indescribable ways.

A great rumbling can be heard as the
American troops, with tanks and foot
soldiers, roll in to annihilate these cruel
Nazi's who hold us captive.
Rumbling, the sweet sound of Freedom.
Germans scatter to escape the wretched
power of our welcome rescuers.
They have nowhere to run and they will
answer for their crimes.
I am skin and bones. I am the lone survivor
of my family, but I am alive.
The rescuers must carry me to safety.

A deafening silence tells me it is safe to
crawl my way from under the dead bodies
of my friends and family.
Silence, the sweet sound of Freedom.
Their bodies were all that protected me as I hid
under them, pretending to be dead, myself.
Hutus are nowhere to be found, having fled
from the Rwandan Patriotic Forces.
I am skin and bones. I am the lone survivor
of my family, but I am alive.
The rescuers must carry me to safety.

Creative Writing
Division I – Honorable Mention
“Stop the Pain”
Andrew Padula
Grade 8, St. Joseph School
Teacher: Kathleen Burns



The Lord sat high on His Heavenly Throne,
Appalled at the horrors that the Earth had shown.
Humanity was plagued with evil and hate,
And millions were meeting their sickening fate.
The slaughter of His people made the
Almighty weep;
He hated the sight of corpses piled in a heap.
Such hatred and pain was never God's intention;
The pointless genocide was beyond comprehension.
Throughout Europe, Nazis killed Jews to gain power,
And God's Chosen People faced their darkest hour.
“Cleansing” society, Nazis could not realize
That all life was perfect and unique in God's eyes.
Families were divided, innocent people died,
Fear swept the land, there was nowhere to hide.
Death came from cold, hunger, and disease,
And most of Judaism fell to its knees.
Yet still the Jews hoped that they would be saved,
They could not stray from the path the Lord paved.

Armies saved the Jews, they arrived in a horde,
Repayment for keeping such faith in the Lord.
But when the dust cleared, great damage
had been done.
Millions of awful deaths could not be undone.
This hatred and death simply could not persist,
But surely, God thought, humanity learned this.
To His shock and distress, more people were killed;
Had the world learned nothing from
all the blood spilled?
All this pain and death cannot go on any longer;
If this should continue, how can we grow stronger?
To this day, there is death over all the Earth;
People are judged from the moment of birth.
Love should be our goal, not murder or pain;
We must create peace, in honor of those slain.
Perhaps then we could finally stop the pain.

Creative Writing
Division I – Honorable Mention
“I Survived”
Lucia Procaccio
Grade 8, St. Joseph School
Teacher: Kathleen Burns

“NO!” I wake up every morning like that, screaming, seeing pictures of my past that have haunted me for many years. But I also wake up every morning knowing that with my experiences come knowledge, and it is something that I can spread to all those who will listen. My name is Rose Kimel; I was born on November 3, 1932. I had a mother, father, and brother then, but in the years to come that changed greatly. We lived a happy life in Poland. I loved to ride my bike and be with my friends, but slowly that all changed. The older I became the more I realized what was happening to us. The treatment we were given just because of what we were. We lived in fear for we were Jews. We treated each hour as if it were our last. That hour did come when we were taken; I was ten and would never forget.

There was a hard knocking on our door; my father opened it without hesitation. There were six German Gestapos on our doorstep. Everyone stopped what we were doing, frozen as if we were mice being cornered by a cat. My father was trying to bargain with the Gestapo, he asked how much they wanted, so they would not take my brother and I. But that was pointless-the Gestapo did not give an answer; they just pushed us out of our house. And I knew that I was not going to be coming back.

We were loaded onto a large truck and taken away. Fear was on everyone's faces, but it was not the kind of everyday fear that you have from seeing a spider, or being in the dark, no, this fear was deeper. It was as if they had met their death already and their souls had been taken away. For we Jews knew that whatever our fate was, it was no longer in our hands.

The ride on the truck lasted for a few hours then we were let off at a train. Many, many people were forced into one car, and we were next. Elderly, middle aged, youth, infants; everyone, packed in as if they were not people at all. My family had found a corner of the train that was dry and we sat down and huddled closely together. But we did not huddle for warmth as many did; we huddled because we knew this would be our only good-bye. Finally, what I had learned to call the death wagon, stopped. The doors of the train car flew open and the brisk breeze hit our

I remember it well, the day we walked into the Dachau Concentration Camp. We were separated right away. It was the last time that I ever saw my father and brother. My mother and I were sent to the work camp.

My possessions were taken and then my hair was taken. My hair, which was so beautiful, was cut off like it was nothing. But I came to realize that it was nothing, nothing to anyone but hair. Then came time for our identification; our numbers. Mine was 01548763, and to this day I can still see it. It was my first bit of pain; each number was etched into my skin. I continued on, and I was given a sack to wear. My mother stayed close to me though and kept me warm when I needed it most. We were alone, trapped to make or break our future; to make an appearance was to live.

Every day we walked many miles; the cold air hit us like knives. Our job was to dig holes, deep holes. But they were not holes, they were graves. We would dig them; then throw the thousands of dead in. I saw them, bodies- no, they were not bodies, more like bones. People starved to death, until their final hours of life. No one had identities anymore; they were no one at all. It was as if they were snowflakes lost inside a pile of snow never to be found, never to be distinguished as a person.

I lived like that for three years. I only survived because of my mother. She would give me anything she had, and leave herself just enough to survive. We watched women die of illness, of starvation, from work; but we carried on. Until the end. Something made the soldiers uneasy, and they took it out on everyone. They acted harsher, they were not hesitant to kill, and they did not care if work was done anymore, because it was too late for them. Word had gotten out and talk of salvation was coming. But I knew that a final stand would come before the Germans gave in; they would make sure that as many of us were killed before anyone even had a chance to rescue us.

We woke up that morning to an early roll call. A German soldier came in our barracks screaming, to get up and come outside. There were many who could barely stand. My mother was one of them. It scared me; I saw the many around me, the walking dead. Four German soldiers walked back and forth, guns in hand, speaking softly to one another. Then they stopped. My mother was in the front of the line, and I was in the very back. I could not see her very clearly, but just enough to know what was going on. The soldiers yelled to us, " Goodbye Jews, you die today." And they started to shoot us one by one. I saw my mother fall, like a leaf that falls from a tree, with a light touch, to the ground. I had to think of

what to do though; I was at the end of the line. My mind raced frantically. My mother had given me so much, her food, warmth, company, shelter; her life. And, in return, I had done nothing. It was my turn to do something. I looked around for an escape path, and that is when I saw it. I ran.

I buried myself in the dead bodies, and waited. I could not see anything but the dead, and the smell made me ill. I do not know how long I waited, but I know it was a very long time. I remember hearing strange voices though and people screaming, cheering, and laughing. So I moved. I saw many survivors and an army, but it was not the Germans. I was saved; I had lived. But nothing else was alive with me. An American soldier carried me out of the camp and I was taken to a hospital where I was fed, clothed, and cared for. A wonderful American nurse adopted me; she became my new mother, but I felt that nothing that she could do would ever take the place of my real mother who I would never forget.

After my experience with the Holocaust, I felt a calling to become a writer and let my feelings out about my experiences. For ten years now I have been traveling with a group of Holocaust survivors. We travel around the United States and speak out about our experiences and the prejudices and injustices in our world today. We also did a four-week tour of the world, where we went to different countries and spoke to their people.

On one of our stops, in Africa, I met a child. His name was Navbia. He grabbed my hand, tears in his eyes and he asked, "Can I come with you?" I told the group to wait and I bent over to talk to the boy. I asked him why. He said, " We are the same." So I asked him how. He replied, " That story you told, when you were ten and taken away, I was ten when it happened to me." His parents, five brothers and sisters, and relatives were killed in the Rwandan Genocide. I understood now that we were the same, both nearly slipping away with our lives. Both fixed to be the only remaining; trapped between prejudices that we were too young to understand.

That is when I realized, that the holocaust was no different than any other killings. It may have been different in numbers, but not in reason. It starts with a person who hates and turns into many who destroy, destroy people just because they are different from themselves. But killing because of differences is not the answer. It will never solve anything. You can never change how strongly someone feels about something but you can make an impact strong enough on them to make them wonder if they are doing the right thing. So ask yourself, can you make a difference by seeing everyone the same?

**Creative Writing
Division II – 1st Place
“Holocaust Isn’t Hebrew”
Kyle Johnston, Grade 12
Green High School
Teacher: Elaine Miller**



~1~

The evening was dreary. The moon was hidden behind the clouds, and rain slowly pattered on the ground. The sporadic hunting cry of an animal could be heard in the distant jungle. The cooking fires had either been blown out or drowned long ago. Ashwala listened to the soft sound of the wind whooshing across his thatched roof. He began to sweat, unable to control the chaos in his mind.

His thoughts kept going back to the news he had heard of the Darfur massacres. He had friends in Belmawa, a small village outside of Al Fāshir that had recently been razed by the Arabic “Janjaweed” militia. Saulka’s family had lived in Belmawa. He and Ashwala had been friends since early childhood. They had trained together to become proud warriors like their ancestors. They would accept nothing less than perfection. They would honor the spirits of their deceased families. That is what they told each other. And that is what they had been doing. But now all that is about to change. For once again, a genocide has begun.

~2~

Oakville High School is a relatively small institution. Its student body is comprised of roughly 400 students, grades nine through twelve. Yet an older man stands looking at the school in awe. For the school he had attended didn’t have half that many students, grades Kindergarten through twelve. His name is Isaiah Schwartz. He has grown noticeably older since his school days. He is a little taller with an ever-growing stomach, a feature he frowns upon daily. His hair has grayed. A matching beard grows on his chin. Wisdom shows in his aged eyes. Memories of his school help prepare him for the speech he is about to make to the Senior class at Oakville. Putting out his hand, he grasps the handle and walks inside the door.

~3~

Would the Janjaweed come to his village? He lives outside of Nyala, not far from Al Fāshir. And what would he do if they did? While thinking this, he sees Saulka outside his hut. He goes out to greet him.

They speak in their Western Sudanese dialect. After small talk, the conversation becomes serious.

“Have you heard of the killings? Men, women and children are being slaughtered all across Darfur.”

“I spent many hours thinking about this, Saulka. We must prepare ourselves for the arrival of the Janjaweed. We don’t have weapons equal to theirs. But we do have the spirit of the ancestors on our side.”

Religious beliefs held by those like Saulka and Ashwala are the reason the Janjaweed push deeper into the heart of Sudan. At night, the fires light the sky for miles. During the day, the smoke blankets the sun. The Sudanese need help. But who will offer their hand to this drowning civilization?

~4~

The Senior class had been assembled in the small, stuffy auditorium. Isaiah takes a drink of water out of a paper cup, then drops it in the waste bin. He’s a veteran when it comes to speeches. But this one’s for a different reason. He knew he had to do something when he heard about the genocide in Sudan. In some way, he was going to help. He has money. But money is only a temporary solution to a permanent problem. He wanted to do something that would have a long-lasting effect. Then he realized that there was no better way to affect the future than to educate the future generations.

“Everything’s ready for you, Mr. Schwartz. Take a few minutes and do what you need to do. We’ll wait for you.”

“Thank you, Principal Hart. I’ll be right there.”

~5~

Whooo-OOOOOOOO! Whooo-OOOOOOOO! The warning horns were bellowing from the bowels of the jungle. Ashwala knew that could only mean one thing. The Janjaweed were coming. There wasn’t much time to prepare. The women and children would have to be escorted out of the village by the elders. All the able-bodied males would be required in the resistance against the Janjaweed. He knew that he and his tribesmen had little chance of winning. But he must honor his ancestors. He wouldn’t fail his beliefs.

~6~

“We knew that our beliefs were the main reason Hitler and his Nazis were killing us, ruining our lives. But our knowledge wasn’t changing anything. Only educating them out of their ignorance could stop the horror that was happening.”

Isaiah remembered the fires, the screams, the sound of breaking glass, and the smell of flesh burning off of the bodies of his neighbors, his friends, his family.

"You could hear the friendly Germans bellowing a warning in Deutsch. 'Geh! Geh sehr schnell!'. On that night, Hitler's Gestapo raided our town. They broke the windows of our stores. They burned our houses to the ground. Several of the men ran forward to protect the rest of us. But they were gunned down just as fast as they had risen up. I could only watch in horror as the Gestapo brutally forced us into submission."

~7~

Ashwala couldn't completely understand what they were yelling. He thought that maybe they were speaking with Ja'ali or Shukri dialects. He was able to translate some of it because he traded with several men that spoke Shukri and Ja'ali. Saulka, however, did not understand any of it. He stood with a blank stare on his face as they yelled at him. It took Ashwala a moment to understand what they were yelling at Saulka.

"They want him to get down on his knees. They are going to shoot him if he doesn't get down! Saulka get . . ."

BANG! Saulka's body slumped to the ground.

Ashwala's jaw drops as the last word is being completed. Passion and rage bring tears to his brown eyes as he stares at Saulka's crumpled body.

~8~

"Watching him die was the most horrific moment of my life. My father was a strict believer in our faith. He refused to denounce his heritage at their command. I could barely control the rage rising inside me. I go crazy when I think back to that moment. He lay there, a martyr in his own right. He looked serene lying flat on his back with his arms straight out to the sides. I couldn't take it anymore. I turned my gaze upon the Gestapo."

"The Janjaweed will pay for this," thought Ashwala. "Look at how smug they are. They are so indifferent to what they're doing. They just push onward, killing everyone that refuses to bow down to them. How could they do this? Saulka was a good man! They will pay with their lives!"

"I saw a stick near my feet. So I grabbed it and bull rushed them. I caught the nearest man behind the knee. His leg buckled under him. I hit the second in the stomach before he had the chance to pull his gun on me. The rage continued to grow with every swing I took. But by my third swing . . ."

WHACK! The first man Ashwala attacked had risen. He hit Ashwala in the back of his skull with the blunt end of his AK-47. He was dragged to the center of the village. There the rest of the villagers are on their knees, if conscious. The dead scatter the grounds. The leader shouts something to his men. Then he walks away. The Janjaweed shoulder their weapons as he turns his back. The wind is blowing too hard to hear the pleas for salvation. Lightening cracks and a blast of thunder ripples overhead. The wind dies down. The rain stops. Everything is silent.

~9~

"I was eight when that happened. I stand before you seventy years older. Six decades have passed since the Nazi Holocaust. Humanity has had sixty years to learn. But it has not. Genocide has not been eliminated from the problems of the world. Sudan is currently experiencing what my people experienced in Europe decades ago."

"If I leave you with nothing else tonight, allow me to leave my wisdom. Change your world. Shape the future into a better place. Start now. Educate yourselves. Educate others. We can do great things if we work together. Together we must regain the beautiful things we once had."

Creative Writing

Division II – 2nd Place

"Little Girl"

Katie Zehner

Grade 11, Green High School

Teacher: Elaine Miller

Little girl looks up at a face
Haunted by the eyes before her
Standing at a nearby place
To chaos framed in gold pure.
A wind blows in from out
The wild country's curious
Vines peer in, yet remain stout
Tuscany's face, red and furious.
A bountiful and beholding land
Overflowing rich with history
Tenderly loved by man's own hand
The past no longer a mystery.
For underneath the deep-sown soil
Evil coats the rock below
A dead snake stays tight in coil
Where fountains of blood still flow.

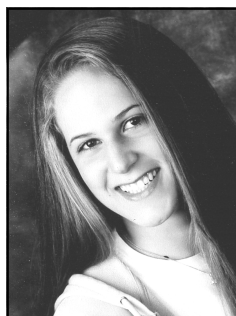
Fossoli camp, come back alive!
 For on the beaten backs of men
 And hate and lust and death you thrive;
 Shake the dust from where it's been!
 Chains and guns kept prisoners here
 Starved and spectral, they'd stay
 Away from the leering guards in fear
 Hoped liberation would steal the day.
 Rings around the necks, eyes, and ears
 Emaciated, pale bodies there
 Children's cheeks soaked with tears
 Sights more than little girl could bear.

The painting on the wall was filled
 With several stories each person told
 Those raped, torn, beaten, or killed
 Eyes with horrors of the past unfold.
 She'd seen such images in the text of a book
 The school or library would always provide
 Horrific sites she'd never once overlook
 But harsh reality would still somehow hide.
 'Till she had come and physically stood
 Upon the ground where souls were lost
 Now in full to grasp she really could
 The enormity of life so carelessly tossed.

When people have no value
 Destroyed, dead, and forgotten
 In a tale we simply can't construe
 From the reigning evil and the rotten.
 How could society let this be?
 Where was God at a time so garish?
 Why can't people just learn to see
 That every life is something to cherish?
 We must not forget the lesson learned
 Nor pretend it never occurred
 For in our hearts that hurt has burned
 It's a true nightmare, it's been conferred.
 So keeping close in her mind and soul
 Little girl will forever remember
 Not to let her heart blacken as coal
 And the damage left to smolder as an ember.

A visitor from across the bold sea,
 That little girl in Fossoli...was me.

Creative Writing
Division II – 3rd Place
"Hope for a Home"
Amy Corman
Grade 9, Revere High School
Teacher: Mic Hayes



Shoes, bottles, knives, and jewelry lay scattered among the bones of the murdered Tutsis in a gruesome memorial, formerly a church, near Nyamata, Rwanda. Local leaders had told 5,000 Tutsis to hide there for safety during the genocide of 1994 between the Hutus and Tutsis. Grenades thrown at the church left only three survivors. Our mission group witnessed similar disturbing scenes in many other churches and schools in June, 1995.

The Hutus murdered more than 800,000 Tutsis within one hundred days, leaving nearly 350,000 children orphaned. Outside the Nyamata church, an eleven year old boy told us his story. The night the Hutu militia came, he and his brothers, aged eight and six, hid in the shed of a Hutu uncle in hopes that the Hutus would not look there. When the boys returned home, they found the bodies of their murdered parents on the floor of their destroyed house.

With help from a charity, *Hope and Homes for Children*, the three orphaned boys kept their house, fixing it up the best they could. Given money for seed, two goats, and school funding for the younger boys, the three started new lives without parents. The oldest boy stays home, tending to their land. This young boy's story stirred my emotions and triggered an image from my past.

On March 3rd, 1939, I curiously questioned with my four year old voice, "Where am I going *Vati* (Daddy)?"

"You're going on a trip to England," he responded as we hurried through the crowds of the Berlin Train Station. "Remember, we talked about this."

"What did we talk about *Vati*?" I asked with even more curiosity.

"We talked about how you will be going away on a vacation to stay with a family in England."

"You're my family! Why aren't you going with me?"

"This is a trip just for little Jewish boys and girls like you to keep you safe."

"Safe from what?"

"Remember those soldiers that marched down the street? This trip will protect you from them."

"I remember them. They scared me with their BIG guns."

"*Alles einsteigen!*" "All aboard!" called the station master.

"There's no more time to talk, my little *Schatz* (treasure). I love you. Don't forget to use your manners and behave!" he whispered as he kissed me on each cheek.

"*Vati!* Don't go! I love you!"

He gently pushed me up the train steps and tossed my suitcase beside me. With tears in his eyes, he choked, "You must go now. Your *Mutti* (Mommy) and I will miss you."

"I'll miss you!" I cried from the top step. "Give *Mutti* and Sophie-Cat a butterfly kiss for me."

Tears streaming down my face pressed against the window, I took my last glimpse of *Vati* and began the long journey to England on the *Kindertransport* (children's transport). When we arrived in Holland, we boarded a ship traveling overnight to Harwich, England. In our cramped cabin, my petite, seventeen year old bunkmate, Sarah, rocked me while I tried to sleep. I felt seasick and homesick. From Harwich, with Sarah by my side, we rode another train concluding our trip to London. With mixed emotions of excitement and fear, we met our new families.

My family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell, their son Johnny, home for spring break from the University, and a fluffy cat, Macy. Johnny had fiery red hair and a million freckles. Macy reminded me of my soft, grey Sophie-Cat. They rented a cozy three room apartment in Leicester Square, not far from the underground station. Smiling ear to ear, Mr. Blackwell fumbled with my heavy bag, trying to find an easy way to carry it. I shied away at first from the family, but when Mrs. Blackwell spoke to me with her sweet voice, I felt less nervous. Her attempt at German made me smile and giggle. We climbed many narrow stairs to apartment 263, Mr. Blackwell stumbling with my bag the entire way. That first night, hungry and worn-out from the trip, I failed to notice the colorful welcome signs covering the faded wallpaper. I only felt my stomach rumble with excitement for Mrs. Blackwell's specialty, fish and chips for dinner and crumpets for dessert. Afterward, slipping into my favorite lavender nightgown, I paused as it fell over my head to sniff the scent of home. In the room I shared with Johnny, I fell asleep instantly in the comfort of a warm, soft trundle bed.

"Good morning, Allie," a woman's voice spoke gently in broken German.

"*Mutti?* *Mutti*, is that you?" I asked, rubbing my sleepy hazel eyes.

"I'm sorry, dear. I'm Mrs. Blackwell, in London."

"I want my *Mutti*," I sobbed.

With hand motions, she said in English, "Put some clothes on and come to breakfast. We can get to know each other."

"Ok," I sniffled, wiping tears away.

Set for two, the table welcomed me with warm biscuits and apple juice. Late once again, Mr. Blackwell slipped on goulashes, grabbed his raincoat, and dashed off to work. Johnny had already returned to the University that morning, so Mrs. Blackwell thumbed through a German/English dictionary, asking me questions about home. I talked about Sophie-Cat and we agreed that Macy sounded just like her. Speaking of home, my eyes filled with tears, so Mrs. Blackwell cheered me, saying she would send a telegram telling my parents that I had arrived safely. After learning about my interests, Mrs. Blackwell pulled out some paper and water color paints for me. I used to

paint at home. I painted pictures of Sophie-cat, my family, and nature. Mrs. Blackwell hung some of my paintings on the walls.

Suddenly, someone knocked on the door. Mrs. Blackwell answered it and I heard a familiar girl's voice. When Mrs. Blackwell told me I had a visitor, I ran to the door and squealed when I saw Sarah! I hugged her tightly while she explained that she lived next door with the Warners. Mrs. Blackwell invited her in for tea and let the two of us chat.

Since I did not know much English, Sarah came over every evening to keep me company and tell me bedtime stories. She told stories from her youth. Like me, she missed her parents. My frizzy hair and dimples reminded Sarah of Peter, her little brother, who died from Scarlet Fever at the age of six. She talked about her best friend, Krista, and their school days. Still too young, I longed to go to school. Sarah taught me many English phrases so I could speak with the Blackwells.

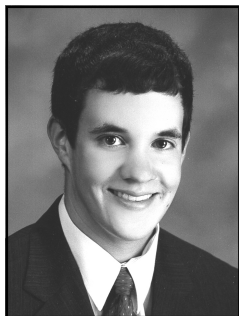
Mrs. Blackwell baked a fluffy cake with lavender icing for my fifth birthday on August 22nd. I received 'best wishes and love' in a telegram from *Mutti* and wondered why it did not mention *Vati*. When I learned that a soldier killed him outside our home, Sarah soothed me with a lavender teddy bear that she had sewn herself. It meant the world to me.

On September 3, 1939, the radio announced that Britain had declared war on Germany. I wondered about *Mutti*, my only relative, alone in Germany. Would she be safe? The Blackwells tried to ease my fears, but I never felt as strong a bond with them as with Sarah.

The following August of 1940, brought many challenges. Germans began bombing airfields and factories in England. Air battles and daylight raids shook our apartment. At night, Mrs. Blackwell would close all the curtains and turn off all the lights. It worried me that we might be bombed. I stopped receiving telegrams from *Mutti* and trembled at the thought that I might never see her again.

Almost five more years passed when on May 8th, 1945, the war finally ended in Europe. The German children of *Kindertransport* could return home, only I heard from the *Movement for the Care of Children* of my mother's death in a concentration camp. Many others, including Sarah, found themselves orphaned. The Blackwells offered to adopt me, but Sarah and I felt like sisters and hoped for a home of our own. Sarah already had her own apartment in the same building as the Blackwells, so at twenty-three, she received permission to adopt me. The two of us worked several jobs, raising money to travel to America in 1950.

In America, I fulfilled my dream of attending school by graduating from high school and college. Now, a retired history teacher, I volunteer at the Virginia Holocaust Museum in Richmond. I lead tours, telling my Holocaust story, but also sharing the story of the young boy in Rwanda. I want visitors to know that genocide still causes orphans today and how they can help children in many countries through charities like *Hope and Homes for Children*. Many kind and generous people helped me when danger surrounded me, causing me to become an orphan. Now... it is my turn to help.



**Creative Writing
Division II – 4th Place
“Auschwitz”
Dan Menyes
Grade 12, Green High School
Teacher: Elaine Miller**

A woman stands with a candle in hand,
Eyes focused forward, unblinking, unchanging.
She utters not a word, for nothing could describe
The tremendous pain she feels inside.

Huge buildings built on the foundation of hate
Stand in the shadows of the dark still night
Symbols of torture and symbols of distress.
Symbols of death, and of eternal unrest.

A single pair of rusted railroad tracks
Lead to the entrance of this unimaginable place.
The souls of millions cry into the air,
Cries of desperation, cries of despair.

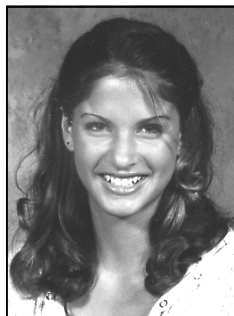
Fences and walls surround this terrible site
Locking in the death, locking in the hate.
This place has no remorse, it has no shame,
Pure evil itself can be the only thing to blame.

The woman shakes and falls to her knees
Tears of remembrance stream down her face
Visions of terror force the woman to cry
"How could you let my loved ones die?"

A woman stands with a candle in hand,
Eyes focused forward, unblinking, unchanging.
She utters not a word, for nothing could describe
The tremendous pain she feels inside.

**Creative Writing
Division II – Honorable Mention
“Reminder”**

**Elizabeth Benzie
Grade 12, St. Vincent-St. Mary High School
Teacher: William O’Neil**



“Dinner!” Elsa called, wiping her flour-caked hands on a towel. The television was on as she stepped into the living room, the six o’clock news host reading teleprompted headlines.

“Another grim day in the Darfur region of the Sudan,” she said. “Fifty-six bodies were uncovered

in a mass grave, the third found in the past two months. This string of discoveries is only the beginning of what the UN has called an ethnic cleansing by the Sudanese government assisted by the Janjaweed. In other news...” Elsa’s grandson shrugged, turning off the television, his face expressionless. She shook her head in disbelief as David brushed past her to sit at the kitchen table.

“Grandma, come on,” he said impatiently.

“Did you hear that?” Elsa exclaimed, “2005 and ethnic cleansing is still occurring. How...” She was at a loss for words.

“Yeah I know. So I was thinking about going to see a movie tonight with this girl I met the other day,” he replied nonchalantly.

“David, this is a big deal. The Sudanese government is killing entire villages simply because of their race,”

“Yeah, it’s uh pretty sad I guess...but you know, it’s not the first time something like this has happened. Could you pass the butter? This bread’s a little dry,”

Dry bread. Elsa’s thoughts flashed back to 1946. It was cold, bitter. Her fingers were white and numb as she stood in line with the other girls. Starving as she was, she felt nothing; she was accustomed to the emptiness of her stomach after seven months in Buna. She moved forward a few more steps and chunk of bread was shoved at her. She chewed it slowly, savoring every bite. The bread was dry.

“Grandma, the butter?” David interrupted. “Are you ok?”

“Yes, yes...sorry. I was just...here’s the butter.” She fingered the sleeve of her blouse pensively. Silk. Another flashback. She was curled up in her bunk unable to sleep for the shivers that racked her thin body. An older girl had stolen her blanket before she had even lain down, and after a long day of work she was unable to put up a fight. Suddenly a woman bent down next to her and slipped her a rolled up blanket, then hurried away nervously. Elsa recalled wrapping

the too-short burlap blanket around her, thinking it felt like silk.

That night Elsa dreamed she was back in the camp and woke up in a cold sweat. She hadn't had these nightmares in years. Why now? Suddenly she recalled the news story she had heard earlier that evening. A tear slowly rolling down her face, Elsa realized that things had not changed as much as people seemed to think. The holocaust that she had lived through was repeating itself. She threw off her comforter and walked across the hall to her grandson's room, chilled by the cold floor under her bare feet.

"David, I want to talk to you," she said. While most people knew she had been there, she had never told anyone about her time in the camps. She realized now that keeping quiet was the worst thing she could do. Although her story could never do justice to the people she lived with in those camps, perhaps it could help to prevent it from happening again.

Creative Writing

Division II – Honorable Mention

"Pressed in a Book"

Ali Cook

Grade12, St. Vincent-St. Mary High School

Teacher: William O'Neil

I have been growing older for quite some time. My skin no longer glows in the sunlight, but sags from the wrinkles and weariness of my age. I am tired but very much alive- well aware of the changing times and able to remember the darkness of the past. I have loved, and have been loved, but have also experienced a tragedy that no words can explain. My story is a different one: I am a witness, a survivor, and a Jew. I am countlessly blessed to be able to tell my memoir yet, the fact that I escaped the unimaginable tortures of mankind has taunted me for decades. I constantly ask, "Why?"

My name is Anna Marie Levy. I was born in March of 1929, in a small European country known as Luxembourg. My father, Johan Levy, was a German Jew whose family had been settled in his homeland for nearly three centuries. My mother, Suzanne Harrison, was a beautiful but rebellious American who had traveled to Europe in 1922, at the age of 19, to study French culture and fashion. My parents met in France during the summer of 1925. Their relationship is one that I have often compared to the sappy love novels that young girls worship. My mother, who had often ignored her parents advice and consent, married Johan that fall. My sister, Annabelle, was born in France less than six months later. Suzanne, after three years of living abroad, could not bear to return home. She convinced my father to settle in the quaint

and quiet region that is Lux. The country appealed to my parents because of the humbleness of its people, and the French influence on its culture (both my mother and father were fluent in the French language). So, Lux became our home. Lux adopted my mother so much so that when the Great Depression began in the 1930's, she never thought twice about returning to America. My father owned an antique furniture store, and my mother worked along side him, putting her dreams of becoming a famous designer aside. I enjoyed a wonderful childhood. My sister and I often lived in our own imaginary world. We would escape to the lush gardens behind our house and fancy for hours that we were princesses and exquisite royalty-astounding to look at, yet more intelligent than any male suitor who would attempt to charm us. My world consisted of ballet lessons, paper dolls, and make believe until one warm afternoon, at the age of ten, I realized that my parents were no longer singing in the kitchen, or dancing in the living room. They had changed, and I hadn't noticed the difference in attitude for quite some time. I remember my mother and father sitting Annabelle, who was thirteen, and me down on the back porch and trying to explain to two young and feisty girls that our lives were about to change. The day was September 1, 1939, and Adolf Hitler had invaded Poland. World War II was waiting at our doorsteps.

I tried to act surprised by the news, but in reality, I was utterly confused. Perhaps I had been a sheltered child, living under the protection of my doting parents. But, as ridiculous as it sounds, I did not comprehend the words my parents spoke about this "evil" man and his Nazi army. I was too young to understand that Hitler had risen to power in 1933, or that 30,000 German Jews already were struggling to survive in concentration camps. I could not comprehend that someone could hate my family simply because we went to the synagogue on Saturdays or because I wore the Star of David around my neck. My parents, as calm as they tried to appear on the surface, were obviously terrified- they knew that it was only a matter of time before the Germans would begin to demolish Lux, and its Jewish population of men, women, and children. For awhile my life went on as it always had. I went to school, took my dance lessons, and had sleep overs with Annabelle and her older girlfriends; however, slowly but surely, my life was being altered. My father's business began to suffer, and my mother no longer spent hours of in front of the mirror perfecting her hairstyle- they were pale and nervous, having grown years in only two. Then, in the spring of 1940, shortly after my eleventh birthday, they came. They rode in on tanks and polished guns on the sidewalks, their shining helmets reflecting the evil of their stern glances and the hatred that glazed their eyes- the Nazi's, who brought with them food rations, and curfews, and the star.

By the summer of that year, my father's business, like all the other Jewish-owned retail establishments, had been closed by the Germans. I was no longer allowed outside by myself, and Annabelle and I weren't allowed to enter the community swimming pool, movie theater, or our beloved ballet studio. For the first time in my young life, I went to bed hungry and noticed that every passing Saturday meant less and less familiar faces at the synagogue. My mother, who had become much less lively, would walk every afternoon at three to a non-Jewish friend's home, and use the telephone to call her parents overseas. My father, who I often caught staring blankly into space, had received word that his German cousins had been deported to a so-called "work camp" known as Auschwitz-Birkenau. I fought with my parents often that summer, refusing to wear the hideous yellow mocking of my beloved necklace every time I went outdoors. I was miserable not being able to frolic about as I was accustomed and towards the end of that summer, my mother informed me that Annabelle and I were not permitted to return to school. I felt suffocated. Suddenly, my beautiful Lux was being pushed and shoved about. I yearned to scream out from my small body that I was tired of the "new" rules, tired of the "new" ways.

I will never forget the day that revolutionized my fragile world, December 24, 1940. My mother woke my sister and me up early that morning. She summoned us to our basement where my father was sitting. His face was buried in his worn and calloused hands. My mother spoke quietly, as if she believed all of Lux could hear her secret. She told Annabelle and me that we were leaving-tonight. She spoke of how her parents, terrified of losing their only daughter and her family, had secretly arranged for us to be transported to Spain, where we would board an ocean liner heading to New York City. My mother confessed that she had been planning the trip for over a year, since the first signs that the Jews of our country could be deported to camps in Poland and Germany. She was confident that we would be safe, as her parents had obtained false American passports using my mother's maiden name, Harrison. I still remember sitting on that damp floor wondering how my mother had hidden such a profound secret-I was angry and confused. I had always believed that the Americans would come to us, not us go to them! I didn't want to leave and have to learn some crude English language or pretend that I was someone who I wasn't. I loved Lux. I loved the beautiful French language and the quiet countryside. I had never yearned for skyscrapers and department stores; material possessions were not my fantasy.

Many years later, as a I look back upon my fate, I realize how fortunate, how blessed, I am. I escaped the "Final Solution" and the death marches. I survived

the unbearable starvation and the crematories. Yet, I am still bitter. Bitter that my father's family was completely terminated before we even ventured to America. Bitter that I had to be swept away from my home because of my faith, forced to start over in a completely foreign land. Bitter that the Holocaust of World War II did not shake humanity at its core and prevent further massacre and hate. Even in the United States, the land of the free and the brave, I have witnessed destruction -- the racism against Blacks, destruction. The abortion of babies, destruction. The genocide in Sudan, destruction. The horrific kidnappings in Uganda, destruction. Will our world ever learn? As I sit and wonder, I realize how lucky I am to be alive and healthy at the age of seventy-six, but I also realize this. That mankind has not comprehended its lesson. The Holocaust of the 1940's is in the past, but for me and the other survivors, not a day passes that I do not ask myself the same, repeating questions. I was young, venerable, and sheltered, but I understand now how beautiful it is that I can see the wrinkles around my eyes and smile at my grandchildren; however, the older I become, the more I pray for an end to hatred. Listen to my message-I have survived Hell once, but how many times can the world survive Hell before its fires consume us?

When I reached New York City, at the end of January 1941, I cried. For hours and hours I sobbed on my grandparent's couch and then I decided something. I was finally free. At that moment, I pulled my yellow star out from the bottom of my shoe where it was hidden, and placed it in a book of paper dolls my mother had let me take from home. Then I closed the book, the star pressed inside, and ended a chapter of my life. To this day, I still have that book of figurines, but I have never opened it, and I never will. My memories are pressed there within that star of David, and I will not dwell on the evil I have overcome. I am grateful, joyous, and fortunate, but I am still a witness, a survivor, and a Jew.

Creative Writing
Division II – Honorable Mention
"The Final Solution"
Theresa Louis
Grade11, Green High School
Teacher: Elaine Miller

It is said that he who permits evil, commits evil. If this is true, I am guilty beyond forgiveness. I was there. I saw it happen. I witnessed, and shamefully was involved in one of the most horrendous crimes of evil and sadistic slaughter of innocent human beings in history. Like thousands of others, at the time I was desperately looking to place the blame for Germany's failures as a

nation. The German people turned to a man whose very soul was submerged in venomous hate. Under his leadership I was a willing executioner and a slave to hatred.

At first I was hesitant to go along. However, soon my voice joined harmoniously with the others in endless shouts of "Down with the Jews! Death to the Jews!"

Like my fellow Germans, I believed his words. He shrewdly lured us with his captivating speeches laced with deception. I devoured his hateful words hungrily and stored them in my heart. I now know just how sick he was. I now know that he lied.

Soon our cruel taunts were not enough; we needed to take action. We restricted their civil rights, invaded their homes, and destroyed their businesses, schools, and places of worship. That was not enough; they needed to really suffer. So we publicly humiliated and beat them, and forced them to wear their shame on their clothing.

Still this did not satisfy our perverted desire to see them in pain. So the camps were created; the final solution to the Jewish problem. We tore their families apart and herded them like worthless animals into trains that delivered them to hell on earth.

I stole the lives of thousands of people in those camps, and to this day, every last one of them haunts me in my dreams. Their faces covered in expressions of terror and agony, terror and agony I inflicted, are printed in my memory. Their faces have opened my eyes to the evil I have done. Their grief and suffering, have become my grief and suffering. I see their haunting expressions every day, year after year. I remain alive, and no punishment is harsher.

There is only one way to prevent this kind of evil and that is through love and understanding. By embracing differences, uniting together, and treasuring life for the precious gift that it is, we can solve problems in our society and ultimately in our world. Most importantly, we must never permit hatred or blind, ignorant fury. This is the final solution.

Creative Writing

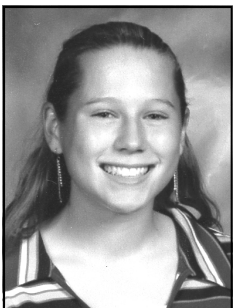
Division II – Honorable Mention

"Starting Over: A Story Of the Holocaust"

Kelly McKisson

Grade 9, Revere High School

Teacher: Mic Hayes



The muggy, sweltering heat lost the battle over my consciousness as a high-pitched whistle resonated off the walls of my small ranch house. Getting up from my red flowered chair, I

shuffled over to the petite fridge, decrepit stove and card table that were my kitchen. The thud of my wooden cane and saggy weight of my wrinkled skin were reminiscent of how many days had gone by.

Halfway to the "kitchen" I turned. Staring back at me were the hollow unblinking eyes of a beautiful young woman in the strong working arms of a happy young man. The faded photograph was now hard to see, but you could still see that the couple was inundated with the naive joy of youth, so excited, so happy...

The unrelenting teakettle called me back, and I continued my slow, shuffled walk down the house. I found my faded blue mug alone in the chipped cupboards fabricated with torn checkered wallpaper and poured myself a cup of bland tea. The liquid seemed like molasses, slow and reluctant to leave, afraid of change, not at all like the young couple in the picture.

Done up in their finest, the couple was ready for their journey. Their bags were packed and they were ready to "explore new opportunities". Unfortunately, in German that translates to "relocate to work camps".

They would have been upset when told they were not able to bring luggage, however they were going on a journey of chance that would lead them to a new life, not only for them, but also for their new baby (the young woman had just gotten pregnant). Besides, there was a nice looking young boy who wanted to take their picture.

Setting the empty mug back in the rusty hole of a sink, I shuffled back down the hall to my red chair, picking up the photograph on the way. I eased myself into the only real furniture in the room, my only real friend, knowing that it must feel like me, all alone, decaying, and a little unwanted.

At the turn of a knob, sparks and static brought a little black and white television to life.

"It's like the government wants to get rid of these people by sending them to a desert to die. I just can't imagine what they are going through. Back to you, Matt."

"Thank you Louise. Isn't that just awful? In other news the lady that tripped in a pothole is suing the city for reckless..."

Click.

Through tearing eyes I stared at my world, forever changed by the evil of man. Would they ever learn?

Snuggling, the couple happily chatted about their future, until the screaming started.

The Germans who had been pleasantly "guarding" the train cars began yelling orders and pulling passengers out into the cold. They were told to evacuate the train and even before the last person was off they watched, through frightened eyes, as their train to a new life disappeared from sight.

They were told that if, if they ran fast enough to

their camp they would live, and after the shot of a gun they were off. As they passed through the trees, they saw it, Auschwitz. This was the beginning of their future.

It was May of 1944 and the young lovers had been split up from the start. Brief sightings of her face or silent touches of his hand were the only things keeping them alive.

September 1944, after a long period of separation, the two at last sighted each other again. After five months of pregnancy, her belly hadn't gotten any bigger.

December 1944. They had been in the camp almost eight months and were ragged. Bone thin, dead tired, almost ready to give up, their only hope was encouraged by glimpses, whether real or fake, of each other.

Two a.m. January 1945, a siren went off calling a wave of prisoners to the gates of the camp. The young woman was among them, desperately, frantically trying to find the man she loved.

He found her and the two embraced. While trying to catch the words flying out of her mouth he quickly, but silently observed that her belly was still far from as round as it should have been. She kept talking of their future and freedom.

He broke free of her unrelenting talk of dreams and saw that they were surrounded by women. There was not a man within 50 feet. Something was wrong.

A guard came towards them and shouted at the man to wait with the others. He whispered, "Go free, and I'll. . . ." but was cut off by a quick goodbye kiss. He felt something squeezed into his hand and then she was gone, lost in the throng of exhausted, emaciated prisoners trying to get free.

With a shout and a gun shot, the women were forced to run. He was left alone as the guards went to watch the frightened women try to run for their lives. The one with the heaviest belly slowly moved from the front to the middle, and then to the end. However small she was for eight months pregnant, she was still at a disadvantage over the others. When she couldn't take it anymore she stopped and so did he. Turning and facing the gates he watched as a guard pulled his gun and pointed it at his wife. They all seemed frozen in time, the peace only broken by the sound of a silent finger on a noisy trigger and then the fall of the pregnant woman on the cold, frozen ground.

He screamed as loud as he could, but nothing was heard. His soul streamed out his eyes as he cried for the future, his wife, and the unborn child forever protected from the hatred of this cruel world. Only after they dragged her body, along with others away did he turn and trudge back to his lonely tent. Blood streamed down his fist and he opened his hand to

reveal his wife's wedding band. Remembering the way the Germans forcefully took his, he quickly shoved the ring into his mouth. Hidden under his tongue, they would never take away this last piece of her.

About a week later, the siren rang out again in the darkness of night. The prisoners dragged their bodies like corpses to the gates none resisting the inevitable fate about to come to them. Death would make them happy.

The man was one of the last to arrive. About to fall asleep again, he felt the secret tap of a finger on his shoulder. Turning, he faced a young German soldier and would never forget the words he was then told.

"Go back to your tent and wait for troops. They are here to save you, but until then do not be seen by the Germans, for they will shoot you. Don't worry you will make it. You are a lucky one."

The soviet forces liberated us that day. I should have been happy but all I could do was stare at the picture taken by a little boy, kept secret for all this time, and cry.

I opened my eyes and set the picture on my lap, face down. With my right hand, I lifted my left and twirled the band on my ring finger. I started to turn on the television but a knock on my door interrupted me. "Hi sir, sorry to bother you but my wife and I found a litter of kittens under our porch yesterday and I'm afraid we can't possibly keep them all. Would you like one?"

The man was young, tired and carrying a worn paper box. I saw desperation in his eyes. Reaching into the box, I picked up a scrawny, mewling orange ball of fuzz and before closing the door said, "Now go away." I heard a muttered "...see honey, he's not such a bad guy..." and then the door shut behind me.

I stopped and realized something. We may all complain about cruelty, but if we do nothing to stop it, it just keeps going like a circle of heartlessness. Just like the problems in our world today. If we don't think about the mistakes of the past, we can't change the future. I opened the door and called the people back over to me. There didn't have to be only "one" lucky one.

Ten minutes later the four of us, the cats, the chair and I, sat sharing a frozen dinner, watching Wheel of Fortune, getting up to set the picture back up on the wall I thought, "Maybe starting over isn't so bad."

Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest Judges

Visual Art

Renee Pinski, Chair, Visual Art
Bonnie Cohen
Pat Sargent
Janice Woll

Creative and Research Writing

Hal Foster, Chair, Creative & Research Writing

Screening jurors

Melody Barrett
Kellie Cummings
Michelle Detwiler
Shawn Fitzgerald
Jennie Giaconia
Jeremy Hodgson
Elizabeth Mess
Maria K. Ras
David Roeser
Anne Schilling
Kalie Sheehan

Catherine Stoyhoff

Carrie Toth

Christian Triola

Doug Truax

Final jurors

Randy Cohen

Greta Foster

Debra Newman

Steven Newman

Michael Osherow

Libby Portney

Joseph Pryweller

Andrea Steinberger

Rhonda Wise

Creative Multimedia

Melissa Hughes, Chair, Multimedia

Jennifer Chestnut

Sam Chestnut

Delores Walters

City of Akron Holocaust Commemorative Committee

Katie Wells Goodwin, Chair, City of Akron Holocaust Commemoration Committee

Ophelia Averit
Margaret Andreeff
Judy Bendremer
Colleen Benson
Lici Calderon
Judy Casey
Sam Chestnut
Sally Childs
Carla Davis
Michael Derr
Hal Foster

Jeffrey Heintz
Gary Himmel
Melissa Hughes
Dorothy Jackson
Estelle Kaufman
David Kern
Sabine Kretzschmar
Dora Lipper
Adam Motter
Steve Myers
Renee Pinsky

Cindy Ponos
Debbie Reiss
Gary Rosen
Billy Soule
Mark Scheffler
Russ Siegel
Charles Smith
Sue Spector
Shawanna Swartz
Barbara White
Helen Yeszin

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Proclamation

To The People of Akron:

Whereas: The history of the Holocaust offers an opportunity to reflect on the moral responsibilities of individuals, societies and governments to never forget the state-sponsored atrocities of Nazi Germany wherein six million Jews, Gypsies, Poles, the handicapped and others were murdered from 1933 until 1945; and

Whereas: We, the people of the City of Akron, must always remember the terrible events of the Holocaust and remain vigilant against hatred, persecution and tyranny against all people; and

Whereas: We, the people of the City of Akron, should rededicate ourselves to the principles of individual freedom in a just society; and

Whereas Pursuant to an Act of Congress, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council designates the Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust to be Sunday, May 1, through Sunday, May 8, 2005, including the International Day of Remembrance known as Yom Hashoah, May 6.

Now, Therefore: I, Donald L. Plusquellic, Mayor of the City of Akron, Ohio, do hereby proclaim, Sunday, May 1 through Sunday, May 8, 2005, as:

“HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAYS”

in the City of Akron and urge all residents to join in this international remembrance of those who lost their lives and those who lost their loved ones in the Holocaust.

In Witness Whereof: I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Akron to be affixed hereto this 25th day of April, 2005.

Mayor
City of Akron